BRITISH HISTORY

Ramsay Muir

BRITISH HISTORY

A SURVEY OF THE HISTORY OF ALL THE BRITISH PEOPLES

BY

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LONDON

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PREFACE

THIS book is not a history of England, or of Great Britain, but of the British peoples and their achievements in the world. That is why I have called it simply "British History." Naturally England is in the foreground throughout. But I have tried to weave together, into a single consecutive narrative, the stories of Scotland, Ireland, the Dominions, India and the Colonies—and also, up to a certain point, the history of America; not thrusting these themes into disconnected appendix-chapters, as if they had very little to do with the main story, but trying to bring out the way in which they have influenced and been influenced by the central current of events.

I have tried, also, to give an intelligible account of the history of our own times. It is often said that there is a blank patch in the knowledge of most of us, covering the period between the date up to which our studies were brought at school, and the date at which we began to follow events for ourselves. Boys who are fifteen to-day have no recollection of the Great War; men of thirty have no recollection of the South African War. This is an unfortunate, and even a dangerous, gap in the knowledge of those who are, or soon will be, active citizens. There is no period about which our young citizens have more hazy or confused ideas than the last quarter of a century, and there is no period about which it is more important that they should have clear ideas. The difficulty of an attempt to bridge this gap lies in the danger of displaying bias. I hope I have avoided

this danger. But it is better to run the risk than to fall back upon an arid and meaningless catalogue of unexplained facts.

Since the Great War, our wonderful partnership of peoples, whose heart and centre is in Britain, has entered upon a very difficult and critical era in its history. It is of vital importance that the rising generation of its citizens should have an intelligent understanding both of its traditions and achievements, and of the nature and origin of the problems which it has to face. This seems to be even more important than that they should pass examinations. I hope this book will be found useful for both purposes, but especially for the first.

The book is primarily designed as a text-book for the use of boys and girls in the higher forms of schools. A text-book has to be written in a concise, business-like style. It has no room for expatiation, or for amusing anecdotes; these fall to the teacher's share. But I can see no reason why these requirements should make a book uninteresting or unreadable. Even a condensed and sweeping survey of so great a subject should have a certain epical quality, if the outlines are firmly drawn. If this book is dull, the fact that it is a text-book affords no excuse.

A good text-book ought to be so arranged as to make it easy for the student to grasp the sequence and relation of events. For this reason I have given much thought to the structure and arrangement of the book. I hope that the division into Books, Chapters, Sections, and titled paragraphs will be useful in the classroom, and will also help the student to get "the hang of things."

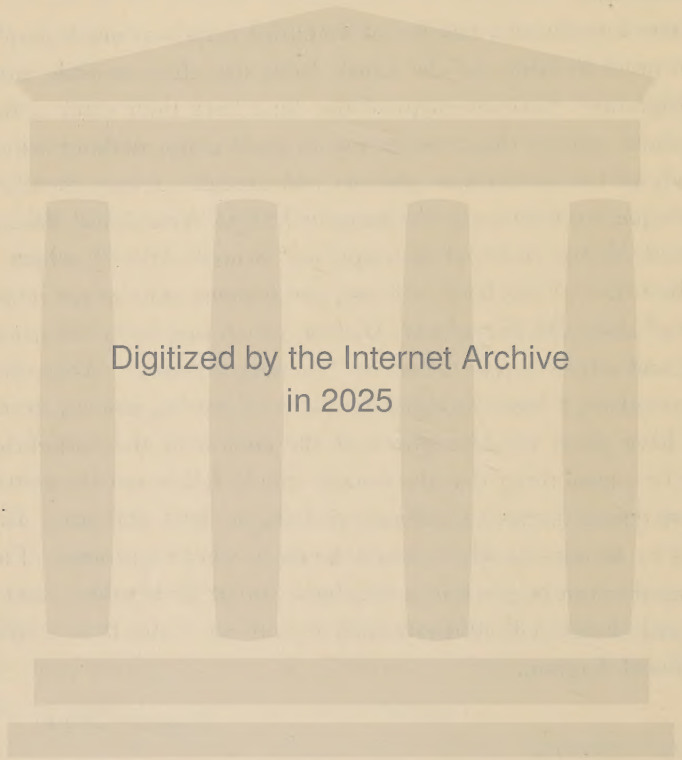
A text-book should supply a firm thread upon which can be strung pearls of knowledge derived from other sources—from the teacher, or from the student's own reading. To stimulate and assist the latter, I have given in footnotes the names of a good many short, readable biographies, novels, poems and essays, such as hard-worked boys and girls can reasonably be expected to read. At the end of each Book I have also added short lists of books suitable for supple-

mentary reading—limiting myself to books of a kind which the hard-working student can fairly be expected to read. In each case, I have given references to the relevant sections of my *Short History of the British Commonwealth*, of which this book is in some sense an abridgment; the longer book is naturally more explanatory than the shorter one.

I have introduced a number of simplified maps—so much simplified (in order to bring out the salient facts) that they are little more than diagrams. Skeleton-maps of this kind have their value. But they cannot replace the constant use of good maps, without which the study of history becomes abstract and unreal. I have therefore given frequent references to the maps in *Philips' New School Atlas of Universal History* (referred to simply as "School Atlas"), which I hope the reader of this book will use, and in some cases to the larger *Historical Atlas, Mediæval and Modern*, which may be in the school library, and which is referred to as "the larger Atlas." Departing from precedent, I have included no plans of battles, just as, in the text, I have given no descriptions of the tactics on the battlefield. It may be a good thing that the student should follow out the course of a few typical battles of different periods, on land and sea. But if this is to be done at all, it should be the teacher's business. The few lines that can be given in a text-book are of little value; and a blackboard sketch will illustrate such a study far better than a stiff, conventional diagram.

RAMSAY MUIR.

RICHMOND, SURREY.
May, 1929.



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BOOK I

THE MOULDING OF THE FOUR NATIONS

(TO A.D. 1216)

FIG. 1.—The British Islands.

BRITISH HISTORY

BOOK I

THE MOULDING OF THE FOUR NATIONS
(TO A.D. 1216)

THE first stage in the history of the British peoples is the assembling of the various racial elements out of which they have been made in the crucible of the British islands; and then the moulding, from these elements, of the Four Nations—English, Scottish, Irish, and Welsh.

The racial composition of all four nations is extremely mixed. During many thousands of years, down to the Norman Conquest of 1066, there was a long series of immigrations into the islands. Since 1066 the islands have never been successfully invaded except by invitation. The explanation of this remarkable contrast is that the Norman Conquest led to the organisation of a consolidated State in England, strong enough to keep invaders at bay; and it also helped the crystallisation of the other three peoples into nations.

The subject of our first Book must therefore be, first, the coming of the various races into the melting-pot, and the stirring of the pot by wars and other movements; secondly, the formation of a consolidated State in England, and the beginning of "crystallisation" in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

CHAPTER I

THE ISLANDS BEFORE THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH
(TO A.D. 410)

1. THE GEOGRAPHICAL BASIS

Formation of the Islands.—At a very late stage in geological history the British islands were part of the continent of Europe,

and the Thames was a tributary of the Rhine. Even to-day, a fall of 200 feet in the level of the sea would reunite the islands to the Continent, and a fall of 600 feet would turn into dry land the "Continental Shelf" on which they stand. The first great event in the history of the British people was therefore the geological change which severed the islands from the Continent, and determined that their inhabitants, while near enough to share in the civilisation of Europe, should yet be able to develop their own ways of life apart. The governing fact of British history has throughout been the fact that the British peoples were *of* Europe but not *in* Europe.

This great change was connected with the end of the glacial period, during which a huge ice-cap covered all the northern parts of Europe and America, and extended as far south as the line of the Thames. Not until this vast ice-field receded was human life possible in these lands. There were probably primitive forms of human life before the Ice Age, but they died out. Our earliest ancestors were the rude savages who followed the retreating ice northwards—the first of them, no doubt, crossing the marshy levels from the Continent before the seas had risen (or the land fallen) to the present levels.

Features of the Islands.—As the ice fell back and the seas rose, the islands were disclosed much as they are now; and one marked feature of their geography, which has had a vital influence upon their history, was revealed. The south-eastern part of Britain, which was nearest to the Continent, was low-lying, full of fertile land, and penetrated by navigable rivers. The north-western part was rugged and forbidding, and bent away from the Continent. A line drawn from Plymouth to Scarborough roughly separates these two parts of Britain; and the physical contrast between them has had profound effects upon history, even down to our own days. Ireland was in part cut off from the more civilised region of Britain by this highland barrier; while the whole of Britain lay between her and the continent of Europe, and her own physical conformation —a rim of hills round a central plain—tended further to isolate her.

Forests and Marshes.—All over northern Europe, in the British islands as elsewhere, the receding ice was followed by a growth of dense forests and thickets. During the whole period of migration we must think of Britain as covered with forests, except on the chalk and limestone uplands, which are unfavourable to

forest growth. The rivers were much bigger than now, and their valleys were marshy. The tree-filled vales and plains were haunted by bears, wolves, and wild boars. Primitive man had to be a hunter. The forest was his enemy. It was a very slow and toilsome business to make clearings with his crude implements of stone. And it was only along the bare uplands that he could easily make his way from one part of the country to another.

2. The Earliest Inhabitants

Archæological Remains.—Archæologists, patiently sifting and studying the burying-places, the bones, the stone implements, and the broken potsherds which successive generations have left in the soil, are gradually revealing to us the long, dim story of the successive races who have dwelt in the islands. They have found traces of several distinct races, gradually advancing in civilisation—some who used implements of chipped flint, others who had learnt to grind and polish their implements, others who had also learnt to make pottery and to adorn it in various ways. During long æons of time, these races made the first and most difficult advance in the long upward climb of Man; they escaped from primitive savagery, when Man was little above the beasts, hunting and hunted; they reached the pastoral stage when the cow, the sheep, and the dog had been tamed for his service. The story of the races of the Old Stone Age (Palæolithic) and of the New Stone Age (Neolithic) is very obscure; but there is no reason to suppose that any of them wholly disappeared. When a new race came in, with a new kind of skill, some of their predecessors would no doubt be slaughtered, but others would be enslaved, and yet others driven to the wilder regions farther north and west.

The Iberians: Stonehenge.—The greatest of the races of the Stone Age were the peoples who are often described as Iberians, because their civilisation (which spread over all Western Europe) seems to have started in Spain, and they certainly came from the south. They were a dark-haired, long-headed people, belonging to what ethnologists call "the Mediterranean race." Their chief mark was their habit of erecting huge standing stones or megaliths—sometimes under vast piles of earth, over the tombs of their chiefs, sometimes in great rows or circles under the open sky; and the builders of these structures must have had a considerable degree of

engineering skill. There are more than two hundred of these monuments in the British islands. They are found everywhere, from Cornwall to Shetland, but always in bare places, where the forest did not grow. The chief centre of this early civilisation was on the bare uplands of Wiltshire, where there can still be seen, at Avebury, by far the most extensive of all these structures (though it is now mainly in ruins), and, at Stonehenge, by far the most noble and impressive monument of this kind. From this centre radiated, along the chalk downs, a series of green trackways, still traceable, which linked together a great part of Southern England: the greatest of these, the old Icknield Way, runs along the Chilterns from Wiltshire to Norfolk. And at intervals along the ridges there are round dewponds, cut in the chalk to catch the moisture, and still never dry. Stonehenge was probably erected at the very end of the Stone Age. It is impossible to assign to it an exact date, but it cannot have been later than about 1800 B.C.; that is to say, it was centuries old when the Greeks besieged Troy. But the people who built it must have been in the islands for hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of years before that; they were here when Abraham was setting forth from Ur of the Chaldees to the Promised Land. These dark-haired, long-headed Iberians (with the earlier peoples who preceded them) form the substratum of the British stock, especially in the west, and in Scotland and Ireland. But their language has wholly disappeared; they have left no records save their stones, their tracks, their dewponds, and the skull-formation and colouring which many of us inherit from them.

The Bronze Age.—About the time when Stonehenge was built, Britain (and later, Ireland) began to be penetrated by another race, who came across the North Sea from Northern Europe—a round-headed people, with fairish or chestnut hair, who buried their dead in round barrows, and who owed their strength to the fact that they had learnt to make implements of bronze. They belonged to what ethnologists call the Alpine race. The Bronze Men spread over the islands, conquering or blending with the Iberians; they too form part of the substratum of the British stock. During the Bronze Age, and even during the later Stone Age, there seems to have been a good deal of contact with Europe, despite the difficulties of the sea passage. It would seem that it was in the Bronze Age that agriculture began, for the Bronze Men grew some corn.

3. The Celts

The Celtic Peoples.—With the coming of the next group of peoples we begin to pass from the dim and clouded knowledge of archæology into the clearer light of history. The Celts were a great congeries of peoples, partly of Alpine stock, partly blended with the big-boned, fair-haired Nordics of Northern Europe. They spoke an "Aryan" language, linked with Greek and Latin, Persian and Sanskrit. They were a very warlike people, and their supremacy was secured when they learnt to make weapons of iron. From the seventh century onwards, and perhaps earlier, they seem to have spread over the greater part of Central and Western Europe, from the Danube to the Atlantic, conquering and blending with the earlier peoples. In 390 B.C. some of them actually sacked Rome; later, others invaded Asia Minor, where they were the ancestors of St. Paul's Galatians.

Gaels and Britons.—This vigorous people, bringing with them the use of iron, invaded Britain in two or perhaps three waves. First came the Gaels, whose tongue is still spoken in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands: they seem to have come during the Bronze Age, and may possibly be the race whom we have called "the Bronze Men." Later—somewhere about 600 B.C.—came the Britons, and drove the Gaels before them into the wilder lands of the west and north; later still there was an irruption of Belgæ into Southern England. The British tongue is still spoken in Wales, and was until modern times spoken in Cornwall. But the population of these regions is by no means purely Celtic. It is predominantly descended from the dark-haired peoples whom the Celts conquered. The conquest was, however, so complete that the conquerors succeeded in imposing their languages upon their subjects, scarcely a trace of whose speech survives. By the time of Alexander the Great, when Britain was visited by the Greek traveller Pytheas (*c.* 330 B.C.), the whole of the islands were Celtic, in the sense that the Celtic speech was universal.

Celtic Civilisation.—It is therefore difficult to distinguish the Celts from the subjects whom they assimilated. But it is clear that they were a vigorous, warlike, romantic and poetical people; and the strain which they contributed to the population of the islands has been of immense value. They were organised in clans, perpetually at war with one another: in the Scottish Highlands and in Ireland their clan system survived into modern times. They grew

corn; they smelted iron, especially in the Sussex weald; they fought from chariots; they delighted in ornaments, and had an art of their own, making finely decorated helmets and body-armour. The great earthworks which they erected for purposes of defence, mostly on hill-tops, are still to be seen in many parts of Britain. They had a religion of nature-worship, with many gods, and many superstitions. Their priestly caste of Druids wielded great power; and they sometimes offered human sacrifices. Some features of their religion may have been borrowed from their subjects; for its priest-craft and its cruelty had no parallel in the religion of the other Indo-European peoples with whom they were akin.

External Connections.—The Britons naturally maintained close relations with the kindred tribes across the English Channel. Through these came a stream of traffic from the distant Mediterranean, and there was even a direct trade by sea, especially for the tin of Cornwall and the Scilly Isles, and for the pearls which Britain then seems to have produced in abundance. Through these channels the Britons learnt a good deal, and their civilisation was steadily progressive. They even struck coins, imitated from the coinage of the Greek merchants; and the coming of money, in place of barter, always marks a great step forward. Britain was being brought into contact, as yet very indirectly, with the civilisation of the Mediterranean. This contact was made direct and intimate, and Britain definitely came into the light of history, when the Romans decided to add these ultimate isles, on the verge of the known world, to their spreading empire.

4. The Roman Occupation

Cæsar's Visits.—For two centuries before the Christian era, the Romans had been conquering all the Mediterranean lands, and bringing under their sway the whole world of western civilisation.* Between 58 and 50 B.C. Julius Cæsar was making the last great addition to this empire, by the conquest of Gaul.† Finding that the northern Gaulish tribes were being encouraged or helped by the

* For the Roman Empire, see School Atlas, Plates 8, 9. This reference, and all similar references, are to Philips' New School Atlas of Universal History.

† *The Conquered*, a novel by Naomi Mitchison, gives a very vivid picture of Celtic life at this period, both in Gaul and in Britain, and of the Roman conquest.

Britons, he resolved to teach the islanders a lesson. In 55 B.C. he crossed with a small force to the Kentish shore, but did no more than force a landing and return. Next year, 54 B.C., he came again with a larger army, and, forcing a way across the Thames, burnt the stockaded fort of the great chief Cassivellaunus, who had made a confederacy against him, and took homage from a number of chiefs, among them

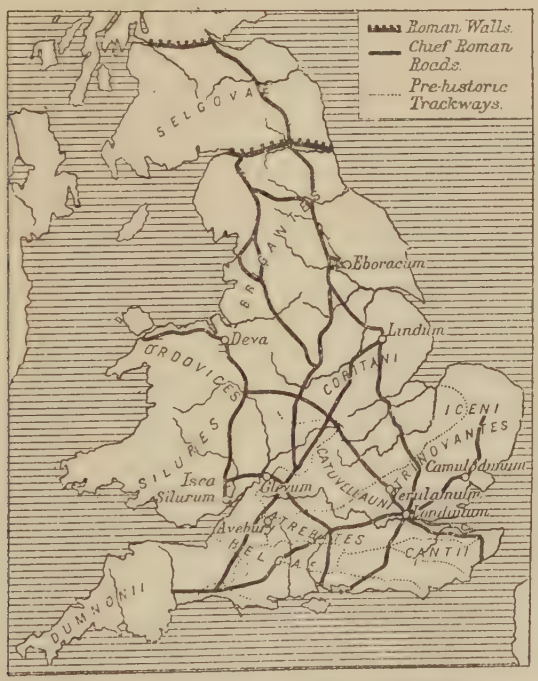

FIG. 2.—Pre-Roman and Roman Britain.

the chief of the Trinovantes in Essex. Troubles in Gaul prevented him from doing more; and nearly a century passed before the Romans returned. The account of his expedition which Cæsar wrote is the earliest historical reference to the British islands.

The Roman Conquest.—In A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius resolved upon the conquest of Britain, because its chiefs, especially Shakespeare's Cymbeline and his son Caractacus, who were chiefs of the Trinovantes, had been causing trouble in Gaul. A powerful army under Aulus Plautius spent five years (43–47) in conquering

the south and the midlands, which became a Roman province, with its capital at Verulamium (St. Albans).* But the conquest of the wilder west and north was more difficult. The Silures in South Wales, the Ordovices in North Wales, and the Brigantes in Yorkshire, gave a great deal of trouble. In A.D. 61, while the governor Suetonius Paulinus was fighting in North Wales and subjugating the last refuge of the Druids in the sacred isle of Mona (Anglesey), a formidable revolt broke out in Norfolk under Boadicea, the warrior queen of the Iceni, who had been robbed of her heritage by Roman officials; three Roman towns were sacked, and a legion cut to pieces, before the revolt was quelled. Thereafter the south was secure.

Agricola.—Wales and the country north of the Humber were not conquered until the time of Julius Agricola, who governed Britain from A.D. 78 to 85. Agricola had the good fortune to have the great historian Tacitus as a son-in-law; and from him we get a full account of these events. Agricola even tried to conquer the whole island, and advanced far north into Scotland; somewhere in Perthshire, he defeated Galgacus king of the Caledonians, at the battle of Mons Graupius (A.D. 84). He meant also to conquer Ireland; history would have been changed if he had done so. But he was recalled by a jealous emperor, and the Roman province in Britain never extended beyond the limits he had won for it.

The Roman Walls.—Indeed, it did not long extend so far; for about A.D. 122 the Emperor Hadrian decided to abandon the barren north, and built a massive stone wall, with forts at intervals, from Newcastle to Carlisle, to mark the northern limit of his empire and of civilisation.† His work still remains, a splendid structure, striding across the wild moorlands of Northumberland. Later (143), under the Emperor Antonine, a turf rampart was built from the Forth to the Clyde; but the Scottish Lowlands, between the two walls, were never firmly held.

The Roman Occupation.—The Roman occupation of Britain, thus defined, lasted more than three centuries and a half (A.D. 43–410); that is to say, longer than the whole history of the United States since the sailing of the *Mayflower*. Throughout this period, three Roman legions—each 5,000 strong—were stationed at the three fortresses of Isca (Caerleon), Deva (Chester), and

* For the Roman conquest and occupation, see School Atlas, Plate 30.
† School Atlas, Plate 30*b*.

Eburacum (York); in addition, large irregular forces, including many Germans, garrisoned the wall, and were often rewarded with allotments of land. Observe that it was the wilder west and north that alone needed to be garrisoned; the civilised south-east could be left alone. We know very little about this long period, or about what happened to Britain during its course. In A.D. 286, when the Empire seemed to be about to break into fragments, a Roman general, Carausius, for a time ruled Britain independently, and tried to make it the base for a conquest of Gaul. But these troubles came to an end, and the Empire was reorganised and saved for another century. One of the great reorganisers, Constantine, who made the Empire Christian and founded Constantinople, had a British mother, and started his career in Britain. But these political events tell us little about the development of the country and its people.

Opening up of the Country.—Some things, however, do clearly emerge. In the first place, the Romans made great paved roads through the country in every direction, shearing through the forests and bridging the marshes and rivers. This meant that the country was opened up; and it is certain that the taming of the forest must have made great strides during the Roman period, for Britain became famous as a wheat-growing country. In the fertile south, especially, the country began to wear a civilised aspect.

London and Town Life.—The roads, as they came from the Kentish coast, had to cross the barrier of the Thames. The spot chosen for this crossing, whence the roads radiated north and west, was London; which consequently became a trading centre of great importance. Commanding the whole road system and the greatest navigable river, and having easy access to the sea, it was marked out as the future capital of the land; though the Romans never used it as a capital, nor even made it a *colonia* like Colchester and Gloucester. There were only a few organised Roman towns. But there were a good many villas, especially on the south coast and in the vale of Gloucester. Broadly speaking, the upper classes seem to have been Romanised, and to have adopted the Latin language; but the mass of the population was never fully Romanised as in Gaul and Spain.

Christianity in Britain.—One lasting gift, however, came in the later period of the Roman rule. Christianity reached Britain. There were British martyrs under the persecution of Diocletian; there were British bishops, who attended Church Councils; and there was even a famous British heretic, Pelagius, who waged fierce

controversy with St. Augustine. How deeply the new faith struck its roots we cannot tell ; over the greater part of the country it was submerged by the next wave of conquest. But at least, when the Romans departed, Celtic Britain was Christian ; and after their departure British missionaries went forth to convert the other island lands—St. Patrick to Ireland (A.D. 432–461), and St. Ninian to Scotland (about A.D. 410).

The Fall of the Empire.—All through the fourth century the Roman Empire was growing weaker. It was holding its own with difficulty against the fierce German tribes beyond the guarded northern frontier. Britain itself was suffering from these attacks, for Saxon pirates were raiding the shores of the peaceful south-east ; a Count of the Saxon Shore had to be appointed to deal with them, and a line of fortresses had to be built against them from Sussex to the Wash, the ruins of which in some cases still survive. At the end of the century (395) the barbarians burst across the Rhine and Danube frontiers, and in a single generation Goths, Franks, Vandals, and Burgundians overran all the western part of the Empire.* In these circumstances the garrisons had to be withdrawn from the remote province of Britain (410), which had to be left to itself. Picts from the North, Scots from Ireland, and Saxons from across the North Sea, ravaged the unhappy land. In vain were piteous appeals for aid sent to the Emperor and his governors. The deserted province, untrained in the arts of war and government, fell into chaos. For nearly a century and a half a curtain of darkness conceals the fate of the island ; until, in the middle of the sixth century, the darkness lifts again, and we see an England divided between a number of warring Anglo-Saxon and Celtic realms. Under cover of this darkness, the most momentous of all the migrations into the islands had taken place.

CHAPTER II

THE ANGLO-SAXON CONQUEST (410–825)

1. The First Stage of the Conquest (410–550)

The Angles and Saxons.—The Teutonic tribes, who were now to settle in Britain and to give to England her name, her language,

* School Atlas, Plates 10*a* and 11.

and much of her character, were of the Nordic stock, long-headed, tall, big-boned, and fair-haired. They were among the most savage and backward of the Teutonic tribes. They were still pagans, and had enjoyed, unlike the Franks or the Goths, little direct contact with Rome. They lived in the low-lying coastlands between the Danish peninsula and the Rhine ; and among them were included Saxons, Angles, Jutes, and Frisians.* We know little about their earlier history, and little about their customs, save what we can infer from later times, and from the general descriptions of German usages given by Cæsar and Tacitus. But we know that they tilled the soil ; that they were organised in kinship groups or clans, though the clan-tie was not as strong as among the Celts ; and that they were divided into castes of nobles, freemen and serfs—eorls, ceorls, and theows. Perhaps the strongest factor in their life, and certainly what gave them their military strength, was the practice whereby each chieftain surrounded himself with a *comitatus*, or war-band of fighting-men, whom he supplied with horses and armour, food and (when he made conquests) land. It was the pride of these warriors never to desert their chief, and not to be outdone by him in valour. These war-bands manned the ships wherewith the tribesmen had long been raiding Britain ; and they formed the spear-head of the conquest, when conquest began.

The Process of Conquest.—We know singularly little about the process of the conquest. The accounts usually given are drawn mostly from Bede and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle ; but Bede's *History* was written three hundred, and the Chronicle nearly five hundred, years after the invasion ; and it is very difficult to extract a coherent story from them. The only contemporary accounts are a brief reference in the life of the Gaulish bishop Germanus, who visited Britain in 429, and a hysterical lamentation by a British monk, Gildas, more than a hundred years later. We can therefore only guess at what happened during the first century and a half. The most likely guess is somewhat as follows.

Period of Devastation.—After the withdrawal of the Romans, the Anglian and Saxon pirates at first limited themselves to plundering raids, like the Danes later ; and in these they sometimes joined forces with the Picts, as in a raid of 429, when Germanus

* Larger Atlas, Plate 10. This reference and all similar references are to *Philips' Historical Atlas, Mediæval and Modern*, edited by Ramsay Muir, George Philip, and Robert McElroy—a more advanced book than the School Atlas.

helped the Britons to beat them back in what was called the "Hallelujah victory"—perhaps somewhere in Yorkshire. By the middle of the century the raids had grown so serious that one of the British "kings" who had arrogated power during the confusion—the Vortigern of the old legend—conceived the idea of turning his enemies one against the other, and hired one of the war-band chieftains, the Jute Hengist, to attack the Picts. Hengist did his work and took his pay; but then, seeing how easy the prey was, he organised a host, made up perhaps of war-bands from many tribes, like the later Danish hosts, to attack the unhappy Britons. For two generations these hosts of fierce warriors, led now by one chieftain, now by another, devastated the unhappy province, burning and sacking Roman towns and settlements: their devastations, Gildas tells us, reached from sea to sea. At length, about A.D. 516, the Britons organised an efficient army under a Romanised Celt called Ambrosius Aurelianus, and contrived to defeat the invaders at the battle of *Mount Badon* (possibly in Dorset), much as Alfred later checked the Danish host of Guthrum; the barbarians fell back, and the Britons enjoyed peace for a long spell—until about 570.

Results of the Devastations.—During this hundred years of devastating war, all the most fertile and civilised parts of the Roman province had been laid waste; all the Roman towns had been destroyed; the upper classes had fled, some to the west, many oversea to Gaul, where they came in such numbers to the district of Armorica that it was henceforth known as Brittany. Much of the land fell out of cultivation. Those of the lower classes who kept their lives remained to labour as slaves for their conquerors. Only the ruder regions of the west, from the Dorset coast northwards to Cumberland, remained unravaged and unconquered.

Period of Settlement.—While the war-bands were busy with their ravages, bands of freemen, with their families and their serfs, were probably brought across to make settlements on the coast. But the process of settlement, as distinct from mere destruction, became more systematic after Mount Badon, when the war-bands scattered to make good their claims to one region or another, and brought over their tribes to make new homes.

The Tribal Kingdoms.—By the middle of the sixth century a group of little kingdoms had thus been planted in the eastern half of England;* but there was a sufficient memory of the common

* School Atlas, Plate 31*a*.

enterprise to make it seem right that some outstanding chieftain should always be regarded as suzerain of the group, or *Bretwalda*—a title which may be a translation of the old Roman dignity of *Dux Britanniarum*. Some of these realms were quite small, and later became English counties, such as the Jutish kingdom of Kent, the Saxon kingdoms of Sussex and Essex, and the Anglian kingdom of East Anglia (Northfolk and Southfolk, Norfolk and Suffolk). But the West Saxons carved out a larger realm for themselves, including Bucks, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and Hampshire. Perhaps they had kept a group of war-bands together, being nearest to the Britons, and they probably included more than one clan; it is significant that they called themselves the "Gewissas" or confederates. In the far north groups of small settlements had amalgamated into the two kingdoms of Deira (Yorkshire) and Bernicia (a narrow coastal strip from the Tees to the Forth). In the Midlands, which could be penetrated by the rivers Trent and Ouse, there were a number of tiny kingdoms, whose limits cannot be defined; but the most important of them were the Mercians, or Borderers, in the Western Midlands—perhaps because they, like the West Saxons, were still in contact with the Britons, and had therefore kept up their war-bands.

During this obscure period, then, we seem to perceive first a long spell of mere destruction, and then a shorter spell of settlement in a number of tiny realms, which still, however, conserved some memory of their common interests. In each of these little realms the invaders were settling down, cultivating the soil, and reproducing the institutions of their homeland. They had their petty kings with their war-bands; and they gathered at intervals in folk-moots to determine whether they should go to war or not, or to decide some dispute about the customs of the folk. We may safely assume that they kept those of their conquered subjects who survived to work for them as serfs, especially on the lands allotted to the *gesiths* (comrades) of the king's war-band. For how else could the *gesiths* be maintained?

Celtic Disunity.—Meanwhile the Britons also were divided, though they too had a memory of their common interests. We hear of two British kingdoms in the south-west, of three in modern Wales and the Severn valley, of one in the West Riding of Yorkshire (Elmet), of one in Cumbria; while over the border the Britons of Strathclyde carried on war against the Angles of Bernicia. Farther north there were two kingdoms of the Picts in the eastern Highlands;

and in 503 the Scots—a Gaelic tribe from Ireland—invaded what is now Argyllshire, and founded the kingdom of Dalriada.

What a chaos had arisen in the islands! How could unity arise from it? Yet, through the confusion, we can already see the dim ghosts of an England, a Scotland and a Wales beginning to appear. The invaders were already beginning to call themselves English, and to give the name of Welshmen, or foreigners, to their Celtic neighbours.

Ireland.—During all this chaos in Britain, Ireland was enjoying relative peace and prosperity, under her tribal chieftains. Thanks to the teaching of St. Patrick, the Irish Gaels had since 450 adopted Christianity. All over the island monastic settlements, centres of learning and religion, were springing into being, and Ireland was becoming the "land of the Saints." From these monasteries missionaries were presently to go forth to labour in the chaos and barbarism to which all western Europe had now been reduced: they were to be found as far afield as St. Gall in Switzerland. And in A.D. 563 the greatest of these missionaries, St. Columba, set sail from Ireland to the realm of his cousin, the king of the Dalriada Scots, and planted in the tiny Atlantic isle of Iona a monastery whence Christianity was to spread over all Scotland, and, after a while, down into pagan England.

Such, in broad outline, is what we can dimly discern of the great change that was taking place in the islands during the chaotic but vitally important century-and-a-half which followed the withdrawal of the Romans.

2. The Three Kingdoms (550–655)

After the middle of the sixth century, a rapid advance began among the English. It had two aspects: on the one hand, the many little kingdoms were consolidated, and the Britons were beaten back to the west; on the other hand, the English were converted to Christianity, and so entered the pale of European civilisation. One of the results of conversion was that the art of writing came in, and historical records began: from this date we are never again in the darkness which covers the previous period.

Advance of Wessex.—In the work of consolidation and conquest, the lead was naturally taken by those English kingdoms which lay on the British border, and had therefore kept their war-bands in training. The first big advance was made by Wessex, under the

conqueror Ceawlin (560–593), who not only brought the Jutes of Wight and the Saxons of Surrey under his rule, but conquered Dorset, and—still more important—defeated the British in the battle of *Deorham* (577), and tore from them much of Gloucestershire and Somerset. This conquest brought the English to the western sea, and cut off the British of Cornwall and Devon from those of Wales. After this success, however, Wessex remained for a long time quiescent.

Advance of Northumbria.—A little later the northern Angles began to advance. The kings of Bernicia conquered Deira, killed or exiled its royal line, and thus created Northumbria. Then Ethelfrith (593–617), with the strength of the united realm, attacked the northern Britons, and after a fierce battle at *Chester* (613), which was followed by a terrible massacre of Christian monks, tore from them Cheshire and the south of modern Lancashire, thus reaching the western sea, and separating Wales from Strathclyde. In 617 Ethelfrith was overthrown and slain by Edwin, the exiled heir of the Deiran royal line. Edwin (617–633) was a yet more vigorous monarch than Ethelfrith. He conquered the British kingdom of Elmet in the West Riding; he had a fleet in the Irish Sea which for a moment held Anglesey and the Isle of Man; he beat back the Picts in the north, and built Edinburgh to hold them in check; and he forced East Anglia and even distant Sussex to recognise his supremacy. He had turned Northumbria into the dominant English State; and the Northumbrian supremacy which he founded lasted until nearly the end of the century. But it also aroused the jealousy of his English and British neighbours, with consequences which we shall see later.

Advance of Mercia.—Before Edwin's death, a similar process of consolidation had begun in the Midlands, led by the border-state of Mercia. Its warrior-king Penda (626–655) subjugated all the little English kingdoms of the Midlands, though they remained as sub-kingdoms, which was a source of weakness. He also conquered from Wessex the lands it had acquired in the Severn valley, and beat back the Welsh almost to their modern borders.

Changing Political System.—Thus, by the middle of the seventh century, three substantial kingdoms, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex, dominated England.* The increased size of these realms naturally brought changes in their methods of government.

* School Atlas, Plate 31*b*.

It was impossible to hold "folk-moots" for such large areas; and these popular assemblies were now limited to the shires in Wessex, or to the sub-kingdoms in Mercia. The power of the kings became greater. Their *gesiths* or fighting comrades, now lords of large estates with many serfs, were proud to be known as the king's *thegns* or servants: they did most of the fighting, and the *fyrd*, or national levy of freemen, was less often called out. The king's court, moving from estate to estate about the country, was the only centre of government; and his council consisted of his "wise men" or *Witan*, including the ealdormen of shires, or the sub-kings of subjugated realms, together with the leading thegns.

3. The Conversion to Christianity (597–664)

Meanwhile a very great thing had happened: the conversion of the English to Christianity had begun.

The Mission of Augustine.—In A.D. 596 the great Pope Gregory I sent a monk, Augustine, with forty followers, to undertake the work. Augustine was instructed to make friends with the British Christians, and to co-operate with them. He failed in this, because during its long isolation the Celtic Church had diverged in many respects from the Roman usage, both in small matters such as the date of Easter and the form of the tonsure, and in larger matters of Church discipline and organisation. But in his main work he had, at first, a rapid success. Landing in Kent (597), he was welcomed by the king, Ethelbert (who had married a Christian wife), and was allowed freedom to preach. Soon Ethelbert and his nobles accepted the new faith; and his capital, Canterbury, became the seat of the mother-church of England. The lesser kingdoms of Essex and East Anglia, then vassals to Kent, also accepted the new teaching, and a bishopric for Essex was established in London. A yet greater triumph followed, when Edwin of Northumbria, the greatest king in Britain, married Ethelbert's daughter. She brought with her Paulinus, one of Augustine's followers, to York; and after a discussion in his Witan, Edwin decided to accept the faith (626).

Penda and the Reaction.—But a reaction followed this rapid success. Edwin's victories had aroused the alarm of his neighbours; and Penda of Mercia had made an alliance against him with the Welsh king Cadwallon. When the allies defeated and slew Edwin at *Heathfield* (633), overran Yorkshire, and burnt York, the North-

umbrians fell away from beliefs which seemed to be so disastrous. Bishop Paulinus had to flee ; there was a relapse also in Essex and East Anglia.

Oswald and the Celtic Missionaries. — Two princes of the exiled Bernician house, whom Edwin had expelled, had meanwhile taken refuge in Scotland, where they had imbibed the teachings of St. Columba. These two brothers, Oswald and Oswy, came to reclaim their inheritance in Northumbria, and brought with them St. Aidan, a noble and gentle missionary monk from Iona, who made his centre at Lindisfarne. While Oswald took possession of the crown and drove back the Welsh invaders (battle of *Heavenfield*, 634), Aidan was at work preaching among the people ; for he was not content with royal and noble converts. Aidan was the real apostle of Northumbria. In 642, however, Oswald was killed by Penda at *Maserfield*, near Oswestry, and for some years confusion returned in Northumbria ; though even then the work of the monks went on. Oswy took up the work of his brother, and in 655 defeated and killed Penda at *Winwood*, near Leeds.

All England Rapidly Converted.—During this interval of confusion, the process of conversion went on apace, conducted partly by Celtic missionaries (in the north and midlands and in Essex), partly by Roman missionaries, such as Birinus, who converted Wessex. In Mercia itself Penda, though himself a pagan, raised no obstacles ; he did not even object to the baptism of his own son. By the middle of the seventh century practically the whole of England had accepted Christianity. That such a result should have been attained within seventy years of the landing of Augustine, and within thirty of the coming of Aidan to Northumbria, is indeed amazing. It suggests that perhaps Christianity had not been so completely obliterated as is generally supposed ; and that British serfs—possibly women tending English children—may have paved the way for the missionaries.

The Synod of Whitby. — But the work of conversion had been due to two different Churches, the Roman and the Celtic, of which the latter had unquestionably played the greater part. There were inevitably conflicts between them. Which should prevail ? In A.D. 664 King Oswy summoned to Whitby a synod of all the English bishops to settle this question ; and there, after long debate, it was decided to accept the Roman form. This decision brought England into communion with the continent of Europe, where the

Church was more and more becoming the supreme civilising force. It was followed by the appointment of an archbishop, Theodore of Tarsus (668–690), by the Pope, to carry out a reorganisation of the English Church. Theodore's main work was to divide out England into dioceses ; * he also organised regular synods of the bishops, which gave some expression to the nascent unity of the English. It is sometimes said that Theodore created the system of parishes, each with its priest supported by tithes ; but this work was carried out gradually after his time, mainly by the bishops and the thegns. Thus within a century of the landing of Augustine, all England had not only become Christian, but had been endowed with a nation-wide organisation which foreshadowed the coming unity of the nation.

Effects of the Conversion. — In a hundred ways the conversion marked an immense advance in the civilisation of the English people. It brought them, indirectly, under the influence of the great traditions of old Rome. It brought them into the community of civilisation. It gave them, in every part of the country, centres of light and learning. It mollified their manners and tamed their savagery. It even began to affect their laws. The bishops helped in the work of government, sitting as members of the Witans ; their learning enabled them to bring to bear some knowledge of continental usages ; and their mastery of the art of writing helped kings and Witans when they began, as they soon did, to set down their laws in writing, and deliberately to mend them in accordance with the dictates of religion.

4. The Rivalry of the Three Kingdoms (655–825)

Christianity did not put an end to the strife of the English kingdoms. There was incessant warfare between the three great kingdoms, each of which enjoyed in turn a period of supremacy.†

Northumbrian Supremacy.—The supremacy of Northumbria came first, secured by the part which the Northumbrian kings had played in the great religious movement ; and for a time Oswy was nearly king of all England. But the political leadership of Northumbria came to an end in 685, when Oswy's son Egfrith, warring

* The English dioceses at a somewhat later date are shown in School Atlas, Plate 35*a*.

† School Atlas, Plate 31*b*.

with the Picts, was killed at *Nectansmere*, beyond the Tay. The leadership of Northumbria, however, was even greater in religious and intellectual matters than in politics; and this nobler supremacy lasted through much of the eighth century. It was in Northumbria that the Venerable Bede (732) wrote, at Jarrow, his *Ecclesiastical History*, the first great historical work written by an Englishman, and the finest literary achievement of that age; it was in Northumbria that Caedmon wrote the first long English poem; and it

FIG. 3.—England, *c.* 750 A.D.

was from Northumbria that Charlemagne drew his learned friend and adviser, Alcuin.

Mercian Supremacy.—The unity of Northumbria broke up after Nectansmere, and Mercia succeeded to the supremacy. Her leadership lasted for more than a century, reaching its culmination under Offa (758–796), the greatest king whom England had yet seen, who corresponded on equal terms with Charles the Great (Charlemagne), King of the Franks, soon to be the first Emperor of a revived Holy Roman Empire. All the little States, save Wessex and Northumbria, were Offa's dependent vassals; he took from Northumbria South Lancashire, and from Wessex its lands north

of the Thames ; and he pushed back the Welsh behind the Dyke to which his name is given. Yet Mercia was far from a unified realm ; and after Offa's death it fell into confusion.

West Saxon Supremacy.—Then, at last, came the turn of Wessex, which had for a long time played no very active part, but had been extending its territory by the conquest of Devon from the British early in the eighth century. Egbert (802–839), a vigorous prince of the House of Ceawlin, who had been abroad in the court of Charlemagne, seized the opportunity offered by the decline of Mercia. In 825, at *Ellandun*, he defeated Mercia and took homage from its rulers ; and before his death he received the submission of every other English State. At last there was a king of All England.

The Kingdom of Scotland.—Four years after Egbert's death, in 843, Kenneth MacAlpine, king of the Dalriada Scots, succeeded to the throne of Alban or Pictland ; and Scotland for the first time appeared as a united kingdom, though still limited to the country north of the Forth.

5. The Civilisation of the English

Four centuries—a longer period than the Roman occupation—had now been occupied in turning South Britain into England. The records show that these centuries had been filled with war between rival chieftains and their war-bands. They had been filled also with another kind of war, which was the main concern of the mass of the people—the endless war against Nature for livelihood, and especially the war against the forest and the marsh, to clear the ground for tillage.

An Agricultural Society.—The English society was almost exclusively agricultural. There were no considerable trading towns, except, in a small way, London ; though there were scattered centres where local marketing went on. The English hated town life, as they showed when they obliterated all the Roman towns ; and it is significant that there is no known instance of an Englishman, however powerful, occupying a Roman villa.

The Township.—The rural village or "township" was the essential unit of social life ; the majority of the population were rooted for life in their township, and had only the vaguest ideas of anything that went on beyond its limits. The normal township consisted of (1) an arable area, divided usually into three extensive ploughed fields, in

each of which every villager held a number of scattered strips, more or fewer according to his standing ; (2) an area of meadow for grass ; and (3) a wide region of waste-land and woods, on which beasts were pastured, and which separated the township from its neighbours. The whole system had to be worked co-operatively, and this necessitated the existence of a number of village officers, such as the reeve or foreman, the hayward who looked after the fences, the shepherd, and the swineherd ; it also necessitated a township moot or court of some kind, to settle disputes about rights and duties.

Freemen and Serfs.—Some villages (especially in the early period) were inhabited mainly by kinship groups of freemen ; others mainly by serfs, tilling the lands of a lord and maintained by the produce of a few strips which they tilled for themselves ; but probably the majority included both freemen and serfs. A very common holding was a "virgate" of thirty acres, ten in each field, together with a proportionate share of the meadow and pasturage on the waste ; while a "hide," of about 120 acres, was regarded as the normal holding for a free household, and was often used as a unit of reckoning.

The Legal System.—Order was maintained by dividing the men of full age into groups, who were in some way held accountable for one another's behaviour : these "frith-borhs" or peace-pledges often included ten men, and were hence called "tithings." The affairs of a district were dealt with in a district court known as the "hundred" ; and above this, for more serious cases, came the folk-moot in the little kingdoms and the shire-moots in the bigger kingdoms. At hundred and shire-moot all freemen were supposed to be present ; but the obligation was burdensome, and tended gradually to be limited to a few, together with selected delegates (the reeve, the priest, and four men) from each township. Over the shire-moot the ealdorman and the bishop presided ; and as the king drew a substantial part of his revenue from the profits of justice, his shire-reeve (sheriff) was also present. Often the right of taking the profits of a hundred-court would be granted to a thegn or a bishop, whose local influence would thereby be greatly increased.

Methods of Justice.—The system of law was still very primitive. There was no "common" law for the whole country, nor were there any professional judges, or juries. The law (or custom of the district) was declared by the whole body of "suitors," or persons bound to attend the courts. A very important element in

it was the table of "wergilds," which fixed the value of men of different ranks, and the compensation that ought to be paid to their relatives if they were killed or damaged: the payment of "wergild" took the place of a blood-feud, and was to that extent an advance. According to modern ideas, there was no "trial" of a case at all. The accuser and the accused swore to the truth of their assertions; then, on both sides, "compurgators" were brought forward, who swore, not to the facts of the case, but to the value of the oaths of the principal parties; and the weight of the compurgators' oaths was assessed according to their "wergild." The nearest approach to a real trial was the ordeal—an appeal to Heaven, which was expected to protect the innocent by preventing hot iron from burning him, or water from drowning him. Ordeals could, of course, be faked. Evidently the English had still a long way to go before they could claim to have a system of law which would do even justice, and protect men in the exercise of their liberties.

The King and the Witan.—At the head of all was the king. Through his thegns, scattered over the kingdom, and through the ealdormen and sheriffs in the shires, the king to some extent had his hand upon the whole kingdom; and his *Witan*, a gathering of ealdormen and leading thegns, to whom bishops were added after the conversion, was the nearest approach to a representative body for the whole realm. It advised the king when he codified or amended the laws; and it exercised the power, when a king died, of deciding which member of the royal house should succeed to the throne. There was no fixed order of succession; so much depended upon the king that it was dangerous to allow a child-king to succeed. The king had no highly organised machinery of government; he had no revenue except his own estates, and the profits of justice and other dues, for no system of taxation had yet been wrought out; he had no fixed capital, but moved with his court from one royal estate to another, eating up the produce of each in turn; he had no regular army, save his thegns and their retainers, and, in times of emergency, the untrained and reluctant levy of freemen, called the *fyrd*.

This was a very crude and rudimentary political system—better organised in Wessex than elsewhere, but far from efficient even in Wessex. The whole strength of the realm depended upon the character of the king and the loyalty of the ealdormen and thegns. The potent force of national sentiment had scarcely yet begun to arise, and one part of the country knew little and cared less about the

sufferings of another. South Britain had become "England" by the time of Egbert, and "England" had become in name a single State; but it still had to be welded into a nation, and it was still an easy prey to foreign attack, as the events of the ninth century were to show.

Influence of the Church.—The English were not only ill-organised; they were also, for the most part, illiterate: very few laymen could read or write. But the coming of the Church was slowly mending that. When priests were gradually settled in the townships; when monasteries were dotted here and there, and started little schools of learning; and when bishops not only advised the kings, but met in national councils, a new force making for enlightenment was everywhere at work—quite apart from the civilising influence of the Church's teaching.

CHAPTER III

THE NORTHMEN: THE GLORY AND DECLINE OF THE ENGLISH MONARCHY (825–1066)

1. The Vikings

A New Wave of Invasion.—Before Egbert had achieved the nominal unification of England, the menace of a new wave of invasion had already arisen. As early as 793—in Offa's time—some Danish pirates appeared off the Dorset coast; they must have appeared earlier farther north. These new raiders made several descents upon Wessex in Egbert's time, but were generally beaten off. In 838 a large band of Danes made common cause with the Britons of Cornwall. They were beaten at *Hengistesdun*, after which Cornwall was annexed to Wessex. But these were only the first mutterings of a storm which was already raging in the north, and which was soon to descend in full blast upon Wessex itself. If Wessex had not stood the strain, the whole of England would have been conquered.

The Northmen.—The new invaders—Danes and Norsemen—were in much the same stage of development as the Saxons four centuries earlier, and they used the same methods of attack. They were, indeed, closely akin to the English. They came from the Danish and Scandinavian peninsulas; and part of that region had

once been the home of Angles and Jutes. Their attacks began more suddenly, and extended far more widely, than those of the Saxons had ever done. For two centuries and a half, down to the early part of the eleventh century, the Northmen terrorised the whole of western Europe, sweeping up all the great rivers of France and Germany, and even attacking the coasts of Spain, Italy and Northern Africa. In all the history of the seas, there have been no raiders more daring than these. They ventured into the stormiest seas, and even crossed the Atlantic, in open boats usually driven by thirty-two oars apiece and a single big sail. These boats carried a crew of about sixty fair-haired giants with horned helmets and mailed jerkins, whose painted shields hung over the bulwarks.

Stages in their Raids.—Like the Saxons, they began with fleeting raids on the coasts ; then, becoming bolder, they would land and march inland, plundering and devastating ; at a later stage they would fortify a headland, and winter alongside their prey ; and finally, from the middle of the ninth century onwards, they descended in hordes, to conquer and settle. This last stage, which was a real migration, was due to the fact that consolidated monarchies were arising at home, and the pirates were unwilling to submit to discipline. The lands which they chose for settlement were England and northern France. The English settlements came first (867–878) ; later, in 913, the French king was compelled to recognise their possession of the wide and fertile region ever afterwards known as Normandy. When once they had settled, they quickly assimilated the civilisation of their new homes ; and, being a people of immense virility, added greatly to the strength of the lands in which they settled. But before they settled, they had gone far to ruin the nascent civilisation of France and England, the more so because their destructive fury was especially turned against churches and monasteries.

The Western and Eastern Routes.—The Northmen (or Vikings) did not, like the Saxons, limit themselves to England : their energies extended to every part of the islands, and in Scotland and Ireland marked a new era as definitely as in England. They attacked the islands by two routes.* By the eastern route came the Danes, who chiefly attacked England ; hence we speak of the Danish invasions. But by the western route came also the Norsemen, from Norway. It is best to use the term "Northmen" to

* See Plate 10 in the larger Atlas.

cover both types of invaders, for both deeply affected the fortunes of the islands.

The Western Invaders. — The Norsemen conquered the Shetland, Orkney, and Faroe islands ; they colonised Iceland, which became a main centre of their civilisation, and beyond it pressed on to Greenland, and later (*c.* 1000) to the shores of North America, which they were the first to discover, five centuries before Columbus.* They conquered and settled Caithness and Sutherland in the far north

FIG. 4.—England in the Time of Alfred.

of Scotland, and made settlements along the shores of the Moray Firth. They made themselves masters of all the western Scottish islands, and of the Isle of Man, calling all these islands the Sudreys (southern islands).† They settled in Cumberland, hitherto purely Celtic, and in Lancashire. Of all these invasions there is little record, but they were of the greatest importance in determining the character of these parts of the islands. Finally the Norsemen also descended

* School Atlas, Plate 42*a*.

† School Atlas, Plate 37*a*. The word "Sudreys" still survives in the title of the Bishop of *Sodor* and Man.

upon Ireland, which had been immune from the Saxon raids, and brought to an end its Golden Age : in 853 a Norseman was overlord of all Ireland. Their chief Irish settlements were at the ports of Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, and Limerick.* Their power in Ireland was not broken until Brian Boroimhe defeated them at the Battle of *Clontarf* (1014). But meanwhile they had ruined the native civilisation of Ireland. On the other hand, it may have been from the Irish that they learnt the art of poetry.

The Danes in England. — While the Norsemen were busy in the West, the Danes had concentrated their attention mainly upon eastern England and the opposite shores of France, though there were also Norsemen among them. Egbert had succeeded in keeping the Danes at bay in Wessex, but he was quite unable to give protection to his vassal realms of Northumbria and Mercia. His son Ethelwulf (839–858) was still less successful. In vain he tried to get help from the Pope and from France. In 854 the Danes for the first time wintered in southern England—at Thanet. The Witan deposed Ethelwulf ; but his three sons Ethelbald, Ethelbert and Ethelred (858–871) did no better. In Ethelbert's reign Winchester, the favourite residence of the West Saxon kings, was sacked (860).

English Settlements. — It was, indeed, at this moment that the Danes seem to have resolved to conquer and settle in England. In 867 a great combined host of them settled down upon Yorkshire, which became a Danish kingdom ; it has more Danish blood than any other part of England. In 870 they conquered East Anglia, after killing its martyr-king Edmund, who was later commemorated by the monastery of Bury St. Edmunds. Next they turned against Wessex. But here they met with a sterner resistance from Ethelred and his young brother Alfred. Six pitched battles were fought in the year 871, the most famous among them being an English victory at *Ashdown*. This resistance was so fierce that the Danes drew off for a while, and during the next few years devoted themselves to subjugating Mercia, where they concentrated their strength in the five Danish towns of Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, Stamford, and Lincoln. But the strain of the fight killed Ethelred ; and young Alfred, twenty-three years old, was left to face the next attack.†

* School Atlas, Plate 37*c*.

† The best short life of Alfred is by B. A. Lees (Heroes of the Nations).

2. Alfred the Great and the Rebuilding of Wessex (871–900)

At this crisis the destiny of England was entrusted by Fate to one of the greatest of Englishmen—the only British king who has borne the cognomen "the great"; and he deserved it. In a frail body Alfred carried an indomitable spirit and a mind of generous outlook: no nobler or purer man ever sat upon a throne.

Athelney and Chippenham.—In 878, taken by surprise by a winter attack, Alfred had to take refuge from the Danish host under Guthrum, in the isle of Athelney, among the marshes of Somerset—where, centuries later, "Alfred's jewel," now the pride of the Oxford Museum, was found. He did not despair, but gradually gathered up his forces, and presently was able to beset Guthrum at *Chippenham* and to force him to accept terms. Guthrum agreed to accept Christianity and to make no more war; and Alfred was left in possession not only of all England south of the Thames, but of that part of Mercia which lay west of the old Roman road, Watling Street. This agreement is known as the Treaty of Wedmore or Chippenham. Eight years later, by "Alfred and Guthrum's Peace," the boundary was revised in Alfred's favour, by the inclusion of Middlesex and other lands west of the Lea.* More than half of England was thus left to the Danes. Outside Wessex and English Mercia, only northern Northumbria, from the Tees to the Forth, remained English. The Danes settled down rapidly in their new homes, and in a few generations were indistinguishable from their neighbours. But for more than a century there was a sharp distinction between the Danelaw and the rest of England; perhaps it was a compensation that the invasions had wiped out the old little kingdoms of the Midlands. Even in the eleventh century it was recognised that there were three different systems of law in England—those of Wessex, of English Mercia, and the Danelaw. And the civilisation of all this region had suffered a woeful set-back.

Alfred's Work of Reconstruction.—Having removed the immediate peril, Alfred set himself to reorganise his limited realm; the *fyrd* was reconstructed, half of the freemen being left at home to till the fields while the other half were called out for service; the obligation of thegn service was imposed upon all owners of five hides (600 acres) or more; ships were built, manned with Frisian sailors,

* School Atlas, Plate 31*c*

to meet the Danes on their own element ; *burhs* were fortified to form nuclei for defence ; the whole organisation of the realm was tightened up. The result was that when a band of Danes from the Continent attacked England in a series of raids between 892 and 896, they were so rudely handled that they withdrew ; and there was no further attack from overseas for another century.

Alfred's Civilising Work. — Alfred's noblest efforts were spent in the endeavour to revive the religious and intellectual life of the land he had saved from destruction. He restored churches ; he brought in scholars from other lands ; he started schools for the sons of his nobles ; above all, he was the father of English literature, collecting the old traditional poems, translating good books into English, and starting the famous Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. There never was a more enlightened or a nobler king ; and his work was the foundation of a period of English greatness.

3. The Golden Age of the Saxon Monarchy (900–975)

During the seventy-five years after Alfred's death, his successors so rapidly extended their power that the nominal suzerainty over all England which Egbert had enjoyed was turned into a reality. These kings built well. Henceforward, whatever troubles might come, the kingdom of England remained a political unit. What is more, during this period Scotland also practically reached its modern limits. Wales had long been marked off by Offa's dyke, and the natural limits of Ireland are defined by the sea : it may therefore be said that in the tenth century the Four Nations of the Islands were finally defined.

Edward the Elder.—Alfred's son, Edward the Elder (900–924) systematically reconquered Danish Mercia and East Anglia, nailing down his conquests with well-placed *burhs* or fortresses, which in the Midlands became the capitals of new shires. When he died, he had brought the whole of England south of the Humber under his direct rule ; while the Danes of Northumbria and the Welsh of Strathclyde gave him homage, in recognition of his power : the Welsh of Wales had already done homage to Alfred.

Athelstan.—Edward's son Athelstan (924–939) brought Yorkshire and Lancashire under his direct rule ; and we are told that all the kings of Britain recognised his supremacy. He even invaded the north of Scotland. When a great coalition of Scots and

Welsh and revolting Danes was formed against him, he gloriously defeated them in the great battle of *Brunanburh*, which was celebrated in the most famous of English war-lays. So mighty a prince was he that the greatest monarchs of Europe sought his sisters in marriage. The good work was carried on by his brothers Edmund (940–946), and Edred (946–955), who firmly crushed every revolt, and confirmed the power of the monarchy.

Edgar the Peaceful.—There was an interval of diminished order under the wilful young king Edwy (955–959); but the reign of his brother Edgar (958–975), known as the Peaceful, marked the culmination of this period of conquest and power. Edgar fought no wars, because he needed to fight none, the whole realm being obedient. All the kings of Wales and the north were his vassals, and even the Danes of Ireland did him homage: the story of how he was rowed on the Dee at Chester by six kings is a sign of the greatness of his power. Throughout his reign, the chief influence belonged to the famous Abbot (later Archbishop) Dunstan—the first great minister in British history, and the forerunner of a long succession of statesmen-ecclesiastics. Dunstan is said to have advised his king to placate the Danes by admitting them to his confidence, and he may have had a voice in the active legislation of Edgar's reign—the chief feature of which was an attempt to improve the policing of the country by reviving and reorganising the hundred-courts. But Dunstan's chief work lay in a campaign for the reform of the corrupt and disorganised Church, and especially of the monasteries, which had not recovered from the ruin of the Danish invasions.

The Emperor-Kings.—The kings of this period expressed their sense of their own greatness by assuming magnificent designations such as *Rex totius Britanniæ*, and grandiose titles borrowed from the Roman Empire. But their strength was more apparent than real. It depended wholly upon the vigour and ability of the king himself, and the loyalty of his chief men. The immediate successors of Alfred were all (save Edwy) strong and able men, and for that reason they were well obeyed by their ealdormen and thegns. But they lacked the machinery for making their government effective in every part of the country, and it was no longer possible for them to visit every district, as it had been in the old days of the little kingdoms.

Growth of Scotland.—Perhaps this was why Edmund, after conquering Cumberland from the Norsemen who had settled there, handed it over to the king of Scotland; and why Edgar, in the same

way, granted to the Scottish king the district of Lothian—that part of Northumbria which lay between the Tweed and the Forth. They may have wished to make friends with their turbulent northern neighbour, who had given so much trouble to Athelstan. But these grants greatly increased the strength of Scotland—especially as the kingdom of Strathclyde, which had suffered greatly from the ravages of the Norsemen, had already become a dependency of Scotland.

The Great Ealdormen.—Again, it is significant that these powerful kings were constrained to entrust groups of shires to the rule of great ealdormen, being unable to rule them directly. So long as the king was strong enough to be sure of respect and obedience this did not matter ; but under a weak king these magnates might act as semi-independent potentates—as they did in the dismal period that followed. A sort of feudalism was thus growing up. It was growing up also in another way. During the anarchy of the Danish invasions thousands of freemen had given up their independence by " commending " themselves to some thegn, and becoming his vassals, in order to obtain his protection. This was the way in which the feudal order was growing up all over western Europe. It meant that thousands of men owed allegiance to a lord, and no longer directly to the nation's king. England, though now unified, was by no means yet consolidated.

4. The Collapse of the Monarchy and the Danish Conquest (975–1042)

Ethelred the Redeless.—The brilliant reign of Edgar had not long ended ere it was shown how weak was the real power of the monarchy when a strong king was not on the throne. Edgar's elder son, Edward the Martyr (975–978), was murdered by his stepmother to make way for her own son ; and no attempt was made to punish the murderers. The new king, Ethelred II, known as the Redeless or ill-advised king, was only ten years old. During his minority the independence of the great ealdormen grew apace, and when he came of age he showed no capacity for government ; he was shiftless, erratic, lazy, and treacherous ; and he gave all his confidence to the worst man in the early annals of England, the treacherous Edric the Grasper, ealdorman of West Mercia. The history of these years is the most dismal part of English history, worse than the Wars of the Roses ; a story of incessant treachery, lawless violence, and civil war.

New Danish Invasions. — Perhaps it was this evidence of weakness that drew down upon the helpless country a new storm of Norse and Danish invasion, which began about 980, and lasted until a Danish king seized the throne of Alfred and Athelstan in 1016 —a generation of utter anarchy. England, however, did not suffer alone; not only Ireland and Scotland but even the recent Northmen's conquest in Normandy, now fully civilised, were afflicted. But the worst of the storm fell upon England, precisely because the king showed neither courage nor energy, and his ealdormen fought for their own hands, and often played the traitor. If an Athelstan had been on the throne, the result would have been very different.

The Danish Conquest.—Here and there the local levies, led by their ealdormen, showed something of their old vigour, as in the famous battle of *Maldon* in Essex (991); and it is significant that the settled Danes fought alongside their English neighbours against the invaders. But the king was never ready; his only device was to buy off the invading hosts—for which purpose he invented the first direct tax ever levied in England, called *Danegeld*, a land-tax of so much on every "hide." But it is futile to fight wasps with saucers of honey. Ethelred also made a sort of alliance with Normandy, marrying, as his second wife, Emma, the sister of the Norman duke Richard: * this marriage was to have momentous results, but it was of no help against the invaders. Another mad device was the treacherous massacre of a number of Danes in England, on St. Brice's Day, 1002. This brought down upon the country a great Danish host, led by Sweyn, a murderous ruffian, son of the king of Denmark, who had taken an active part in earlier raids, but had recently conquered his father's throne, and now came with all the might of Denmark. After many desolating campaigns, in 1013 he mastered the whole country, and the wretched Ethelred fled to Normandy. But Sweyn's victory was immediately followed by his death; Ethelred returned from Normandy, and fresh fighting began with Sweyn's son Canute. In 1016 Ethelred died. His heroic son Edmund Ironside fought with a gallantry worthy of his great ancestors, and forced Canute to an agreement partitioning the realm; but within a year he had died—rumour said, by treachery; and Canute succeeded to the throne of an exhausted and devastated country.

* For the complicated dynastic connections of this period, see Genealogical Table A, at the end of the volume.

Canute.—The reign of Canute (1016–1035) was a happier one than its beginnings promised. For a time England became the centre of a great northern empire which included Denmark and Norway ; * the king preferred to make the more civilised land his home, and used English missionaries to complete the conversion of his Scandinavian dominions. Throughout the reign peace and order were well maintained : Canute kept up a small standing force of *huscarles* which compelled the respect of the ealdormen, and the good days of Edgar seemed to have returned. Canute was a wise lawgiver also, but it is significant that he still had to recognise the threefold division of English customs into those of Wessex, Mercia, and the Danelaw. Like Edgar, he strove to unite Danes and Englishmen in the work of government, and to encourage intermarriage ; and, indeed, the distinction between the two peoples very quickly disappeared. But one great mistake Canute made. He divided England into four great earldoms—adopting the Danish title "jarl" instead of the English "ealdorman" ; and he thus turned the kingdom into what threatened to become a group of feudal principalities, all the more dangerous because they corresponded with the old national divisions of Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria. Not even Canute, with his foreign resources, could consolidate England : there had to be a sterner discipline.

End of Danish Rule.—After Canute's death there was an interval of war between his worthless sons, Harold and Hardicanute (1035–1042), and the great northern empire broke into fragments. During this confusion, the real power fell more and more into the hands of the great Earls, and especially of Godwin, a very able and ambitious Englishman to whom Canute had given the Earldom of Wessex. Godwin was, indeed, the most powerful force in English politics for a generation, and his chief aim was to build up the fortunes of his family. His main obstacle was to be found, not in the power of the crown, but in the rivalry of the other great Earls, especially the house of Leofric of Mercia ; and in the first half of the eleventh century it seemed as if England was breaking up into feudal principalities as definitely as France. When Hardicanute died, it was Godwin who brought over Ethelred's middle-aged son Edward from Normandy, where he had remained in exile during the Danish reigns. The House of Alfred had returned to the throne, but with only a shadow of real power.

* Larger Atlas, Plate 17.

5. Edward the Confessor and Harold (1042–1066)

The Development of Normandy. — The new king came reluctantly from the civilisation of Normandy to the barbarism of war-rent England. For the Northmen, when they settled in France and became Normans, had adopted with enthusiasm the language, religion, and civilisation of their new country. In a single century they had turned Normandy into one of the best-governed and most enlightened regions of Europe. They had taken up the new methods of warfare, mailed knights fighting on horseback, and were already the finest fighting men of the West : erelong their valour was to win for them two new realms, one in southern Italy and Sicily, the other in England.* They had shown a genius for political organisation as well as for war. They were attaining a high excellence in architecture, both military and ecclesiastical. They were the most zealous sons of the Church, and were in the forefront of the great religious revival which was spreading over Europe. Their great monastic foundations were the centres of enlightenment, notably the famous Abbey of Bec, over which two of the greatest scholars in Europe, Lanfranc and Anselm, ruled in succession. There was a painful contrast between the condition of the Church in Normandy and in England, where Dunstan's reforms had not availed to undo the ruin brought by the invasions.

Edward the Confessor. — Edward, the son of a Norman mother, having spent nearly all his life in Normandy, naturally longed to bring the Norman civilisation into England, and surrounded himself with Norman friends. A gentle and religious soul, his chief interest was in Church matters, and he would have liked (if he had had the strength of will) to carry out a reform of the Church in England. His greatest achievement, and his chief title to be remembered by the British peoples, is that he founded, hard by his palace of Westminster, the magnificent Abbey of Westminster, which was to become the central shrine of the British peoples. Also, in the hope of forwarding reform, he conferred the highest Church offices in his gift upon Norman clerics. During the first ten years of his reign a peaceful penetration of England by Norman influences was going on apace. But it could not go very far ; the king had little power, being at the mercy of the great Earls.†

* School Atlas, Plate 13.

† For the Earldoms under Edward the Confessor, see School Atlas, Plate 31*d*.

The Ascendancy of Godwin and Harold. — In 1051, seizing the occasion presented by the insolent behaviour of some Normans at Dover, the great Earl Godwin of Wessex, who had placed Edward on the throne, resolved to make himself the leader of an anti-Norman movement—a very popular cause. But the other great Earls, jealous of Godwin's power, supported the king; and Godwin, who had raised an army to compel the expulsion of the Normans, had to give way, and to go into exile with his sons. During his absence, Duke William of Normandy paid a visit to England in state; he later claimed that on this occasion the king had promised him the succession to his throne. But within a year Godwin was back; the king's opposition collapsed; and for the last fourteen years of his reign he was a puppet in the hands of the great Earls of Wessex. Godwin himself died soon after his return. But his son Harold succeeded to his earldom and to all his power, while his younger sons enjoyed minor earldoms, covering the richest half of England. For fourteen years Harold was the real ruler of England, though he had to walk warily in view of the jealousy of the other great Earls, especially the house of Leofric of Mercia.

The Rivalry of Harold and William the Norman.—Harold proved to be a vigorous and successful ruler. He subjugated Wales (1064), up to the limits of the wild region of Snowdonia; and it was in his period of power that Siward, Earl of Northumbria, invaded Scotland, to help in the overthrow of Macbeth, whose successor, Malcolm III, married the English princess Margaret, and became the ancestor of the whole line of English kings from Henry II onwards.* It is evident that Harold was aiming at the throne; for there was no direct heir in the line of Alfred save a boy, Edgar the Atheling, a grandson of Edmund Ironside. But William the Norman also had his eye on the English throne; for fourteen years the rivals watched one another. It was a point in William's favour when Harold, wrecked on the Norman coast, was tricked into taking an oath, on a casket of relics, to support William's claim.

Harold's Quarrel with Tostig. — To make sure of the position, Harold, like Godwin before him, strove to build up the fortunes of his family. His brother Gyrth was Earl of East Anglia, his brother Leofwine Earl of Essex and Kent; and in 1055, on the death of Siward, his wayward brother Tostig was given the

* See Genealogical Table D, at the end of the volume.

earldom of Northumbria. But this led to a revolt in Yorkshire, and the house of Leofric in Mercia was restive and rebellious. Harold had to submit to the exclusion of Tostig, and the choice of Morcar—brother of Edwin of Mercia—as Earl of Northumbria (1065). Thus the northern half of England was in a state of veiled hostility; while Tostig, refusing to forgive Harold for deserting him, took refuge in Norway, and urged the great Viking leader, King Harold Hardrada, to come to his aid by invading England.

Harold becomes King.—This was the situation when in January, 1066, at the beginning of a momentous year for England, Edward the Confessor died. Next day Harold was elected king by the obedient Witan, and enthroned in Edward's Abbey of Westminster.

William Prepares to Invade.—Instantly William of Normandy began to make preparations for an invasion. He obtained the Pope's blessing, and a consecrated banner. The expedition obtained something of the character of a Crusade. The English Church was corrupt, the House of Godwin had resisted reform, Harold had broken his oath, and the Archbishop Stigand had supported an anti-pope. By proclamations promising lands to all who would help him to win his "rights," William enlisted a host of adventurous knights from all parts of northern France, to add to his own forces; and the shipwrights were busy building a fleet of boats on the Norman coast.* There were nine months of suspense: Halley's comet appeared in the sky, and men watched it with dread, as an omen of great events. But Harold was full of energy. He had a great fleet gathered in the Channel, and the forces of Wessex were mobilised to resist the invader. Months passed, and William did not come.

A Norse Invasion.—On September 8th Harold's fleet had to be sent round to London to be revictualled. A week later came the news that a great Norwegian host had landed in Yorkshire to avenge Tostig. Harold had to abandon his guard, and march hot-foot to repel the new invader. He arrived just after the levies of the northern earls had been defeated outside York. Without delay (September 25th) he attacked the victorious Norwegians at *Stamford Bridge* and inflicted upon them a crushing defeat, slaying the great

* The story of the Conquest is illustrated by the famous Bayeux tapestry, of which there are many cheap reproductions.

Norwegian king, and the treacherous Tostig, and nine-tenths of the invading army.

The Battle of Hastings.—Only a week later (October 2nd) came the news that William had landed at Pevensey on September 28th. Harold raced southward, too fast for the slower part of his army, while the northern earls followed. He reached London on October 7th ; and on October 13th, without waiting for all his forces to join him, he took up a position on a ridge across the London road, on the edge of the forest, six miles north-east of William's entrenched camp at *Hastings*. Here, during a long day, the English footmen behind their shield-wall resisted the Norman attack ; only a feigned retreat by the Normans tempted them to break their line. But at the end of the day, Harold lay dead, surrounded by the bodies of his brothers, of the pick of the thegns of Wessex, and of all his faithful household troops. England had got a new master ; and a new era in her history had begun.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORK OF THE NORMAN KINGS (1066–1154)

1. The Conqueror and his Modified Feudal Organisation (1066–1087)

First Stage of the Conquest.—If England had been a united realm, the single battle of Hastings would not have been decisive. But there was no further organised resistance. The northern earls, though they had an army in being, made no attempt to attack the Conqueror or to raise the country, but retreated to the North, hoping to be left to enjoy their independence. The Witan did, indeed, hurriedly meet in London, and proclaimed young Edgar the Atheling king. But he had no resources ; and when William, avoiding a direct onslaught on London, circled round by Wallingford and threatened the city from the north, resistance was impossible. Led by Edgar himself, the Witan went out to do him homage. The whole of the south-east submitted without another blow. William was crowned King of England at Christmas.* He announced that

* The best life of William I is by F. M. Stenton (Heroes of the Nations). There is also a shorter life by E. A. Freeman (Twelve English Statesmen).

he would observe "the laws of King Edward," which meant that he would maintain English customs. But he also announced that the lands of all who had supported "the usurper" Harold were confiscated. Even this did not arouse resistance. Nearly all the English landowners in the south-east were extruded, and replaced by Norman lords, who thus got their reward. The same method was

FIG. 5.—Norman England.

followed as section after section of the country fell into the Conqueror's hands; and Domesday Book shows that three-quarters of the land of England changed owners during the twenty years following Hastings.

Second Stage of the Conquest.—In 1068, however, during William's absence in Normandy, revolt flared out in the south-west, the midlands, and the north, perhaps because of the misbehaviour of the land's new masters. But there was no unified leadership; and William was able to take each district in turn, subjugate it completely, divide it out among his Normans, and secure its obedience

by the erection of castles. First came the turn of the south-west, where the sons of Harold had been welcomed at Exeter. Then the Midlands were dealt with. Then there was fierce fighting in the north, where the king of Scots (brother-in-law of Edgar the Atheling) and a Danish force came to help the rebels. This rising was crushed with pitiless ferocity : all Yorkshire was devastated, and in 1086 Domesday Book reports, of one manor after another, with grim iteration, that it lies waste. This terrible punishment cowed the broken English. Their last resistance was in the fens of the Isle of Ely, where the gallant Hereward the Wake held out from 1070 to 1072.* But he, too, had to yield in the end : he became a loyal vassal of the Conqueror, and fought for him in France. England was not merely conquered, but utterly subjugated.†

Systematic Feudalism.—In spite of the Conqueror's promise to maintain old customs, the conquest made profound changes. In the first place, the tenure of land was thoroughly feudalised. Although feudalism (*i.e.* the holding of land on condition of service) had been growing rapidly in England, it had never been systematised. In 1066 there had been many thousands of freeholders in England who were subject to no lord ; and even among those who had "commended" themselves to a lord, there were many who could go to a new lord with their land if they desired. In 1086 there were, in a strict sense, no freeholders, for everybody *held* land conditionally, nobody *owned* it ; and every man's land was permanently subject to his feudal superior. All the Normans who obtained grants of land got them on condition of supplying so many knights or fully-armed fighting men for the king's service—usually multiples of five ; and the few English who were allowed to keep their land had to yield it up and receive it back on the same condition. Moreover, it was assumed that every lord had the right of holding a court for his tenants, and settling their differences : only disputes between the tenants of different lords or between minor tenants-in-chief now came before the shire-court. In every "manor" or township there was therefore now a manor-court. Finally, it was tacitly assumed by the Norman lawyers that the tenants of a manor and their land were all subject to the lord of the manor ; and that (in the absence of proof to the contrary) they were bound to the soil, and bound to render

* Kingsley's novel *Hereward the Wake* deals with this episode.

† See the Map of England according to Domesday Book, School Atlas, Plate 32.

dues and services. The result was greatly to lower the status of a great mass of English freemen.

Limitation of Feudal Independence.—But while in these ways the power of feudal superiors was clamped upon the English people, in other ways some of the more dangerous features of pre-conquest feudalism were diminished. William abolished the huge earldoms which had broken up England into a little group of almost independent principalities. No earl was allowed to rule over more than a single shire. In many shires there was no earl at all. In all but a few, there were a number of large landowners who held direct from the king, and were not vassals of the earl ; and alongside the earl there appeared the king's sheriff, now a much more important person than formerly, who collected the king's feudal dues, raised Danegeld taxes, held the shire-court, looked after the system of "frankpledge," or police-grouping, and, when necessary, called out the "fyrd" or national levy. The continuance of this popular force alongside of the feudal levy was a very important modification of feudalism, and an effective check on the independence of the baronage. Thus the sheriff, working the old English shire system, materially qualified the rigidity of the feudal order. The baronage was further weakened by the way in which (owing to the piecemeal nature of the conquest) their estates were scattered over the country, so that they seldom ruled a continuous block of territory. It was only in a few cases, and these mostly in the north and west—on the borders of Scotland and Wales—that the king allowed an earl or other baron to appoint his own sheriff, and to wield full jurisdiction over all his vassals. The number of such cases was steadily diminished as occasion offered during the century following the conquest ; until in the next century there were only two of these "palatine earldoms" left—Durham (under its bishop) in the north, and Chester in the west ; though some of the northern barons, and the "marcher lords" of Wales, continued to enjoy a higher degree of feudal power than the rest.

Revolt of the Barons.—All this means that the Conqueror, while leaving the humbler tenants very much at the mercy of their new masters, did at least save England from being broken up, like France, into a series of feudal principalities. But this angered the greater Norman barons, who had hoped to carve out principalities for themselves. In 1075 two of the most powerful earls, of Norfolk and Hereford, raised a revolt with the specific object of trying to

break up England into three realms ; and they attempted to get the help of Waltheof (son of old Siward), the only Englishman to whom William had left an earldom. Their rising, however, was easily crushed, and, like later risings of this kind, it only led to a further increase of the king's power : the earldom of Hereford was stripped of its "palatine" rights after its earl had been deposed ; and the unlucky Waltheof was executed. Hardly as they had been used, the English could not but feel that the stern king, who maintained peace, was a better master than his nobles would be ; and he could always count upon their support.

A Competent Despotism.—After this rebellion, William had no further trouble in England. He had a good deal of fighting in France, against his rebellious son Robert and his nominal suzerain the king of France ; and it was in one of these campaigns that he lost his life in 1087. But his mastery in England was unchallenged. The combination of his rights as universal feudal superior with his rights as national king made him irresistible ; and his Great Council (attended, nominally, by all his "immediate" tenants or barons), which took the place of the old Witan, formed no real check upon his power. He used the advice of a group of officers and trusted advisers who formed his Court, and with their aid steadily improved the efficiency of his system of government. But he was the master—a despot, but a competent despot ; which was what England needed at this stage of her development.

Domesday Book.—It is sometimes said that William's taming of feudalism was completed by the *Oath of Salisbury*, which he is said to have administered at a gathering of all the feudal tenants in 1086, making them swear allegiance to him directly as well as to their lords. But the importance of this has been exaggerated. There could not have been a gathering of such vast dimensions ; and, whoever took the oath, it probably referred only to the war in which the king was about to engage. But another event of 1086 did most effectively demonstrate William's mastery of the realm : *Domesday Book* was completed in that year—an amazingly detailed survey of all the lands of England, showing who held them, how many tenants of each class they had, how much stock, how much of their land was tilled and how much waste. There is no corresponding body of knowledge for any other country at so early a date ; and it was of immense value to the competent central government which was gradually growing up. It was primarily drawn up as a basis for the assessment

of Danegeld—a useful source of revenue, which William was unwilling to forgo.

Forest Law.—A few years' experience taught the English to value this firm and masterful government. "He was a stern and wrathful man," says the English Chronicle of William, "and none durst do anything against his pleasure. The good order which he made is not to be forgotten. He was a very wise and great man." There was, however, one aspect of William's rule which aroused deep discontent, both now and long after. Passionately fond of hunting, he withdrew wide areas in which there were woods from the ordinary law of the land, and put them under a special forest-law, which was extravagantly arbitrary and severe. The forest-areas included wide expanses of inhabited and cultivated land, whose residents found their liberties very gravely restricted. Forest-law remained one of the great English grievances for a long time to come, and it was a grievance which Normans shared with Englishmen.

Church Reforms.—If William the Conqueror's political system stood alone, it would mark him as a great king. But even more valuable were the reforms which he introduced in the Church; for the Church was the nurse of civilisation and enlightenment, and it had unquestionably fallen into corruption and inefficiency during the previous century. In all this work William's chief adviser was the great Italian scholar Lanfranc, whom he made archbishop of Canterbury, and who was his best counsellor in political as well as in religious matters. England was brought under the influence of the great religious revival which was at work on the Continent. Normans were placed in almost every bishopric and abbey, and began to enforce the rule of clerical celibacy, whereby the Church strove to free itself from the temptations of the secular world. A great age of church-building began, and some of the noblest minsters of England owe their origins to this time. A new life awoke in the monasteries, which once again became centres of learning. To cut off the church more effectually from the secular world, the Church courts were, by a special ordinance, separated from the secular courts. But while William lent his support to a reform of the Church, he was no more ready to allow an increase of the Church's political power than to allow the disruptive tendencies of feudalism free play. Just because the bishops were such potent instruments of civilisation, he insisted upon controlling their appointment; he would not allow Church councils to pass laws without his consent; nor would he admit a

papal "bull" to England unless he approved of it. He would be master in his own realm.

England had never known a firmer or more competent ruler. The battle of Hastings had seemed a tragedy; but ere its victor's death, it had become apparent that the tragedy had its compensations. England in 1087 was more of a unity than she had ever been; and her unity was never again to be threatened.

2. William Rufus and the Harsh Medicine of Despotism (1087-1100)

The Three Brothers.—The Conqueror bequeathed his duchy of Normandy to his eldest son, Robert, an excellent fighting-man, but a sluggish and shiftless ruler; he left England to his second son, William, called Rufus from his fiery hair—a strong-willed, passionate and ruthless tyrant, but no sluggard; Henry, the youngest and ablest of the three, got nothing but some money. The separation of Normandy from England, even though it was only temporary, was a very good thing for England.

Revolt of the Barons.—At the opening of the new reign there was a dangerous rising of the Norman baronage, led by the Conqueror's brother Odo, Bishop of Bayeux. They pretended that they fought for Robert; they were really fighting to emancipate themselves from the control of the monarchy. To put down this rising, William had to call out the English national levy, and the readiness with which the English answered the call showed that they recognised the benefit of a strong central power. The rising was crushed, and all the rebels were expelled from the country. Both William and his successor Henry I systematically followed the policy, whenever an opportunity presented itself, of putting an end to the holding of estates by the same baron on both sides of the Channel; and the result was that the Norman baronage in England tended more and more to identify themselves with England.

Tyranny of Rufus and Flambard. — William II was a sheer tyrant, but a strong tyrant. Under his tyranny Normans and English, laymen and churchmen, alike suffered. He used his feudal rights to inflict merciless exactions on the barons, levying "aids," demanding extortionate "reliefs" on the succession of a new heir, and using to the utmost his right of "wardship" during minorities. He used his rights as national king to shear the English also, with

Danegeld and tallages and summonses to attend the fyrd. And he equally plundered the Church, keeping bishoprics and abbeys long vacant in order to draw their revenues. Only a severe illness frightened him into filling up the archbishopric of Canterbury after Lanfranc died ; and he was involved in long disputes with Lanfranc's saintly successor Anselm, both in regard to his exactions and in regard to his refusal to allow the archbishop to recognise the legitimate Pope during a schism. But Anselm (who had to leave the kingdom in 1097) was the only man who dared to oppose the passionate tyrant. He had his way ; and the instrument of his exactions was an astute cleric, Ranulf Flambard, afterwards Bishop of Durham, and one of the builders of that noble cathedral. Flambard held the office of Justiciar, which, under William the Conqueror, had only been filled during the king's absence. Henceforth, for a long period, this office became the controlling lever of the whole administrative system ; and it is very probable that Flambard, for the purposes of his exactions, greatly improved the efficiency of the system.

Conquest of Cumberland and Wales.—Rufus was not only effectively master of his English realm, he helped to extend its borders. In 1092 he conquered Cumbria from the king of Scots, and organised the two new shires of Cumberland and Westmorland. In his time, also, great strides were made towards the conquest of Wales. The Earl of Chester in the north conquered Flint and much of Denbighshire ; the Earl of Shrewsbury in the centre won a great part of Powys, which still bears his family name of Montgomery ; while in the south a number of warlike barons, left free from the restrictions imposed on them in England, subjugated half the Principality, and dotted it with castles, which are more numerous in South Wales than in any other part of the islands. Henceforward the " Lords Marcher " of Wales were the most independent and the most turbulent of the feudal baronage.

Duke Robert and the First Crusade.—In 1095 the call went out to Europe to rescue the Holy Places from the infidel, and the First Crusade was organised.* William Rufus, who had no religious enthusiasm, did not dream of taking part ; and England had no share in this great adventure. But Robert of Normandy was eager to go. To find the means, he pledged his duchy to his grasping brother for ten thousand marks ; and Normandy and England were

* School Atlas, Plate 13.

re-united. Robert played a gallant part in the Crusade. He was just about to return, after the capture of Jerusalem, and was perhaps wondering how to regain his duchy, when Rufus was shot, by accident or design, while hunting in the New Forest. The judgment of the English chronicler upon him is that "he was loathsome to all his people and abominable to God." In truth, he was a bad man; yet he had contributed to strengthen the power of the English crown.

3. Henry I and the Development of the Machinery of Government (1100–1135)

Henry I's English Policy.—The absence of Robert made it possible for Henry I, the third and the best of the Conqueror's sons, to seize the English throne. Knowing that he would have to meet a feudal rebellion, he began his reign by marrying the daughter of the king of Scots,* who was a direct descendant of Alfred, a connection which greatly helped him with his English subjects. He also promptly issued a Charter of Liberties, which was later used as the foundation for Magna Carta, and in which he promised to observe "the laws of Edward the Confessor," and undertook not to levy the unjust dues of Rufus, and not to plunder the Church. He was true to his word. Though he was a hard king, he was no tyrant. He saw the wisdom of reconciling English and Normans; and the great feature of his reign was the rapid obliteration of the distinction between them.

Revolt of Bellême.—The anticipated rebellion soon broke out, headed by Robert of Bellême, Earl of Shrewsbury, while Robert of Normandy, now home again, threatened invasion. Henry bought off his brother; and then, calling out the levy of the English shires, he attacked the rebellious barons. After a hard struggle, in which several strongholds had to be taken, the rebels were defeated (1102); their lands were confiscated; and they were expelled from the country. The earldom of Shrewsbury lost its "palatine" powers.

Conquest of Normandy.—Presently Henry was able to turn his attack against Normandy. In the Battle of *Tinchebrai* (1106) Robert was defeated and captured; and for the rest of his life Henry ruled Normandy, though not without much fighting against Robert's son, William Clito, and the king of France. In Wales the process

* See Genealogical Table A, at the end of the volume.

of conquest was pushed forward, till only the principality of Gwynedd was left independent. In Scotland Henry maintained friendly relations with his three brothers-in-law who were successively kings, and had no trouble. For more than thirty years, England was at peace.

The Investiture Contest.—Henry had, indeed, some trouble with Archbishop Anselm, who had returned from his exile on the Continent full of high ideas about the necessity of complete freedom for the Church. The "investiture contest"—which turned on the question whether it was not inconsistent with the liberty of the Church that kings should appoint bishops—was then raging in Europe; and Henry, who largely ruled through his bishops, was not going to yield the power enjoyed by his father. But in 1106 the king and the archbishop reached an agreement, sixteen years before the Pope and the Emperor settled their similar conflict, whereby it was decided that the bishop should be invested by his fellow-clergy, but not until he had done homage to the king for his lands: a decision which left the reality of power to the king.

The Administrative System.—The greatest achievement of Henry's long and peaceful reign was the perfecting of the administrative system, whereby the whole realm, through the sheriffs, was brought under the effective control of the central government. This system was developed from that of William I and William II with the aid of a hard-working group of lay and clerical ministers, some of whom were English; the greatest of them was Bishop Roger of Salisbury. The pivot of the whole system was the *Curia Regis*, or King's Court, a small and active body which included the Justiciar, the Treasurer, the Chancellor, and other officers. It had two aspects, though they were not yet clearly differentiated. On the one side, acting as the Court of Exchequer (so named from the checkered table used for counting), it checked the accounts of the sheriffs, who had to present themselves twice yearly and render a detailed account for their shires. On the other side it was the supreme judicial court of the realm, dealing with cases between tenants-in-chief, looking after the "king's pleas"—serious cases such as murder, robbery, and arson, which were reserved for trial in the royal courts of the shires—and often calling up cases by "writ" or special summons from the feudal courts. During this reign it became a common practice for commissioners from the *Curia Regis* to be sent down to the shires to investigate the doings of the sheriffs, and often to try

cases in the shire-courts. All the courts, royal or feudal, were in some degree subject to review ; and it was claimed for Henry that though his justice was stern, it was meted out equally to Norman and Englishman. Under the pressure of this system, the infinite variety of local customs began to disappear, and something like a *common* law of England began to appear. The king's law was superior both to feudal law and to the variety of local customs.

England was learning the benefit of a strong central government which could thus break down barriers. She was being hammered into a nation. Unhappily the work was soon to be interrupted, and England was to learn what untamed feudalism could mean. For Henry I's only son William was lost at sea ; and the result was that when the great king died in 1135 a disputed succession plunged the realm into nineteen years of misery.

4. The Anarchy of Stephen (1135–1154)

Stephen and Matilda.—Henry had tried to secure the succession for his daughter Matilda, widow of the Emperor Henry V and wife of the warrior-count Geoffrey of Anjou ; and most of the magnates had sworn to uphold her. But the rule of a woman seemed, in those rude times, to be impossible ; and the Great Council of barons conferred the crown upon Stephen of Blois, son of the Conqueror's daughter. Stephen was a good-natured, easy-going man, quite unfit to cope with the inevitable challenge to his rule. Matilda's cause was supported by two powerful friends—David of Scotland, her uncle, and Robert Earl of Gloucester, her half-brother, an illegitimate son of Henry I. David invaded the north of England with an army of wild Highlanders ; but in the *Battle of the Standard* (1138), at Northallerton, he was crushingly defeated by the levies of Yorkshire, mustered by the archbishop and inspired by a car bearing the standards of the Yorkshire saints. Robert of Gloucester was more successful, and he was joined by many barons eager to break the power of the crown. But Stephen could easily have overcome this opposition, if he had had the vigour of Rufus or Henry I. Unfortunately he chose this moment to quarrel with the Church ; and this meant that the administrative system, which was largely worked by churchmen, broke down. Stephen was defeated at *Lincoln* in 1141, and taken prisoner. But Matilda knew no better than her rival how to use power. She, in her turn, was beaten ; and a miser-

able civil war, kept going by the barons for their own purposes, went on until Matilda left England in 1148. Then her cause was taken up by her son, afterwards Henry II, who first conquered Normandy, and then, in 1153, came over to England and made Stephen accept an agreement that Henry should be his successor on the throne. Next year Stephen died, and the great reign of Henry II began.

The Lessons of Anarchy.—The only interest of this dismal episode is to be found in two facts. First, that the administrative system of Henry I broke down, and that its breakdown brought chaos; and, secondly, that these nineteen years gave to the English people their only taste of what unchecked feudal power could mean. All over the country, the baronage did as they would. Hundreds of "adulterine" (unlicensed) castles, "filled," says the chronicler, "with devils," sprang into being. Land went out of tillage. The people were defenceless against their tyrants. "Men said that Christ and his saints were asleep." The lesson was thoroughly learnt. Hard as the Norman kings had been, their work had been good; and the most earnest desire of the whole people was to see it built up again.

CHAPTER V

THE REIGN OF LAW ESTABLISHED (1154–1216)

1. Henry II and the Creation of Just and Orderly Government (1154–1189)

Character of Henry II.—It was a piece of singular good fortune which brought to the throne of England, at this critical juncture, one of the ablest kings who have ever held it; and, by a happy chance, Henry II * was, though a foreigner, the first king since 1066 in whose veins the blood of Alfred ran. He was a man of wide knowledge, especially in the law, a man of hot temper and devouring energy; he never sat down except at meals and in Council. He was able, strong-willed, magnanimous, and possessed a remarkable gift for picking out the men who could be trusted to do the work he

* There is a life of Henry II by Mrs. J. R. Green (Twelve English Statesmen).

wanted done. It was fortunate, also, that when he came to the throne he was already one of the greatest princes in Europe; for this gave him the power to crush out the anarchy of Stephen's reign.

The Angevin Empire.*—Though only twenty-one years old, Henry had already ruled for several years his father's warlike counties

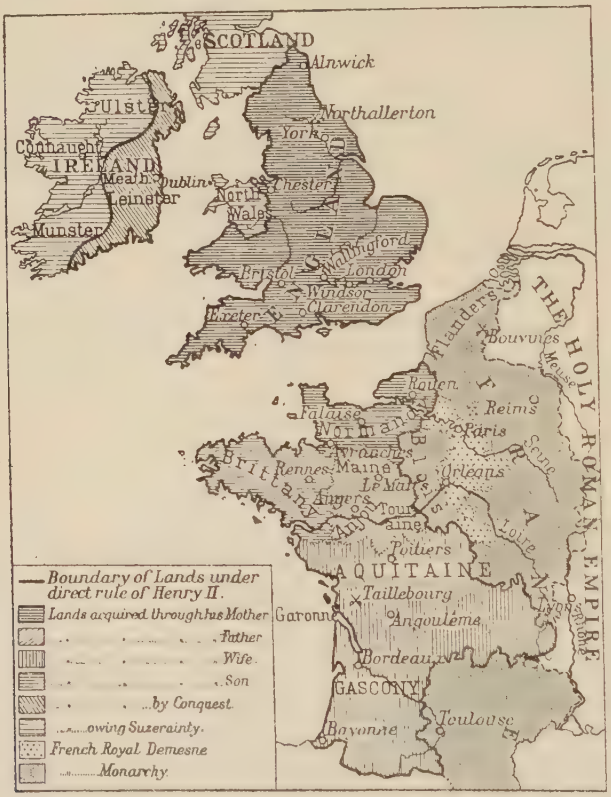

FIG. 6.—Angevin Empire.

of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; he had conquered and administered Normandy in his mother's name; and by his marriage (1152) with Eleanor, heiress of Aquitaine, he had become the master of wide and fertile lands extending from the Loire to the Pyrenees. He

* School Atlas, Plate 33.

completely overshadowed his nominal suzerain, the king of France, whose chief aim was to undermine this over-mighty vassal ; later in the reign, Louis VII of France found the means to this end in the rebellious temper of Henry's high-spirited and turbulent sons, who were under the influence of their arrogant, ill-conditioned mother. But for a long time it seemed likely that Henry would reduce the kingdom of France to impotence. In 1159 he obtained, for a moment, the homage of the powerful Count of Toulouse ; and in 1166 he acquired the great county of Brittany as an appanage for his son Geoffrey, under his control. He was, indeed, the mightiest prince in Europe, save only the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, his great contemporary.

Effects of the Empire.—These immense continental possessions engrossed most of Henry's energy ; he was able to devote only a small part of his time to England—never more than two years in one spell ; but this, with his gift of choosing lieutenants, was enough to enable him to make an indelible mark upon the history of the British peoples, who owe to his genius some of their most characteristic institutions. His continental empire also deeply affected the history of the islands, for centuries to come, by involving England in long conflicts with France. But in the meantime they gave him the power to enforce order in devastated England : the barons dared not resist him.

Restoration of Order.—They soon found, indeed, that they had a master. They were ordered to demolish all the unlicensed castles erected during Stephen's reign, and those who resisted were swiftly punished : 375 castles were destroyed. The king resumed all the royal estates alienated by both sides during the recent strife. The king of Scots was forced to restore Northumberland and Cumberland, which Stephen had allowed him to occupy. The Welsh also, who had got out of hand, were compelled to do homage, though they were not subjugated. Sheriffs were once more appointed in all the counties, and the system whereby Henry I had kept control of them was restored : Nigel, Bishop of Ely, nephew of Henry I's great minister Roger, was made Treasurer to re-establish his uncle's system of accounting. But it is significant that Henry II gave his chief confidence to laymen. Richard de Lucy and Robert Earl of Leicester shared the great office of Justiciar, and with them was Ranulf Glanville, first of the line of great English lawyers, who, after holding many offices, became Justiciar at the end of the reign

(1180). The Norman barons were being called in to work the system whereby their own feudal privileges were pruned ; and so well were these men chosen that throughout Henry's long absences they not only kept the system working, but immensely developed and improved it. This, indeed, was perhaps Henry's greatest achievement—he made a system of government which for the first time in English history did not depend upon the energy and presence of the king.

Henry II as Legislator.—But Henry was not content merely to restore. He was the first great legislator in English history, a tireless innovator and experimenter ; and his laws, called Assizes, laid the foundations of the English system of law as it exists to-day. He was the real inventor of the jury, and of the itinerant judges with their courts of assize ; he was the founder of the "common law" of England. His legislative work was spread over the whole reign, but it will be convenient to describe it as a whole.

(1) **Military Reforms.** — He made certain military reforms which were of real political significance. Henry I had often taken money from the knights in lieu of military service, under the name of "scutage." In 1159, when preparing for his war against Toulouse, Henry II extended this system to the baronage, and the usage became normal. The money enabled him to raise mercenaries, and made him less dependent on the feudal levy ; while the knights became less warlike and more ready to give their time to other occupations, such as administrative work. At the end of the reign, having proved the value of the shire-levies during the rebellion of 1173–1174, Henry issued an Assize of Arms (1181), whereby the proper armour required to be worn by every class was defined. In other words, he armed the nation, English as well as Norman. That he could do this safely shows how the distinction between the races had been obliterated.

(2) **The Travelling Justices.**—In the Assize of Clarendon (1166), which was later modified by the Assize of Northampton (1176), he regularised the tours of the travelling justices whom Henry I had begun to send from the *Curia Regis* round the shire-courts. This now became part of the ordinary system of justice ; and the judges *in eyre*, many of whom, like Glanvill, were excellent lawyers, gradually gave unity to the legal system, and by their decisions, which were recorded, created the "common law," overriding local customs.

(3) **The Use of Writs.**—He greatly extended the system of

"writs," whereby special kinds of cases could be taken out of the ordinary courts and tried before the royal judges, either on circuit or at headquarters. The most important of these writs were a series (known as the Grand Assize and the Petty Assizes) whereby cases affecting titles to land or advowsons could be withdrawn from the feudal courts and settled by a jury instead of by "trial by battle." The more this system grew, the more the king's courts became the main source of justice, and the less became the power of feudal lords.

(4) **The Development of the Jury.**—Henry II was the real initiator of the use of the jury for legal purposes. Sworn men of the district had been summoned for various inquiries (as for Domesday Book) during the Norman period. But in the Assize of Clarendon Henry first employed the system for the purposes of criminal justice, by requiring that on the *eyres* or circuits of the justices, juries should be formed to give a list of bad characters who ought to be tried. The jury did not try them; they were tried in the old way, by ordeal; but even if they passed the ordeal, they were banished from the country. Thus the jury was, as yet, only a "jury of presentment." After Henry's time, when ordeal was abolished (1216), "petty" juries (as distinct from the "grand" jury of presentment) began to be employed to discover the facts. Again, in the Grand and Petty Assizes Henry used the jury to discover the facts regarding claims to land. The development of the jury was an immensely important advance. It meant that, in the shire-courts, knights and freemen were being called in to help in the maintenance of order and the administration of justice; and this was the beginning of self-government. Here, as in the Assize of Arms, Henry trusted the people, and enlisted their co-operation. The jury soon became one of the most cherished of English institutions. Thanks to Henry's reforms, the shire-courts were becoming active centres of work; and this was why they came to be used as the basis of a representative system in the next century.

(5) **Reform of the Church Courts.**—It was inevitable that this orderly and law-loving king should also give his attention to the difficult question of the relations between Church and State. Since William I's ordinance separating the ecclesiastical from the secular courts, many abuses had crept in. The ecclesiastical courts inflicted no penalty more serious than "unfrocking," *i.e.* depriving a cleric of his orders; and as the number of men in minor orders was immense, this meant that great numbers of people could commit grave offences

such as murder without incurring any serious penalty. As early as 1163 Henry appointed a commission of inquiry to report as to what had been past usage in this respect; and in the next year, 1164, he issued, in the Constitutions of Clarendon, a very important document, which covered all the vexed points in the relations between Church and State. On the critical point, it provided that clerks accused of crimes should first come before a king's court to prove that they were clerks; that they should then be tried before an ecclesiastical court, and (if guilty) degraded; and that they should finally return to the king's court to be sentenced as laymen. Other articles of the Constitutions reasserted the principles laid down by William the Conqueror and by Henry I.

Conflict with Becket.—These very reasonable proposals were accepted by the bishops. But Thomas Becket, the archbishop, refused to accept them, on the ground that they were in conflict with the liberties of the Church. Becket had been Henry's chancellor, and had been appointed to the archbishopric in the hope that he would be helpful. Instead, he was utterly unreasonable. A fierce conflict on this question lasted from 1164 to 1170. During its course Becket went into exile, and posed as a martyr. When he returned, he excommunicated the Archbishop of York and other bishops because they had invaded his privileges by crowning the king's eldest son (1170); he also tried to persuade the Pope to put England under an "interdict"—that is, to deprive the whole nation of religious services. At this the king, who had been very patient, lost his temper and used some hasty words about wanting to be "rid of this pestilent priest." Four knights took him at his word, and brutally murdered Becket before the high altar in Canterbury Cathedral (1170). Becket became a saint, and his tomb became a place of pilgrimage. His "martyrdom" preserved the privileges of the clergy, and for nearly four centuries enabled anybody who could read a Latin sentence to commit a murder with impunity. Henry had to do penance, and did not receive absolution from the Pope until 1172. All his enemies rejoiced; the fabric of his power was weakened; and the rebels of 1173 were encouraged.

The Invasion of Ireland.—During the conflict with Becket, a momentous thing had happened: the English conquest of Ireland had begun. Ireland was divided, now as always hitherto, into a number of little kingdoms, each including many clans, constantly at strife with one another; while four Danish chieftains held the

principal coast-towns.* Whatever the evils of feudalism, tribalism is worse, because it means eternal war. In 1155 Henry II had obtained from Adrian IV (Nicholas Breakspear, the only English Pope) a Bull authorising him to conquer Ireland; but as the Bull required that he should hold the island as a vassal of the Pope, he had made no use of it. In 1166 Dermot, king of Leinster, driven from

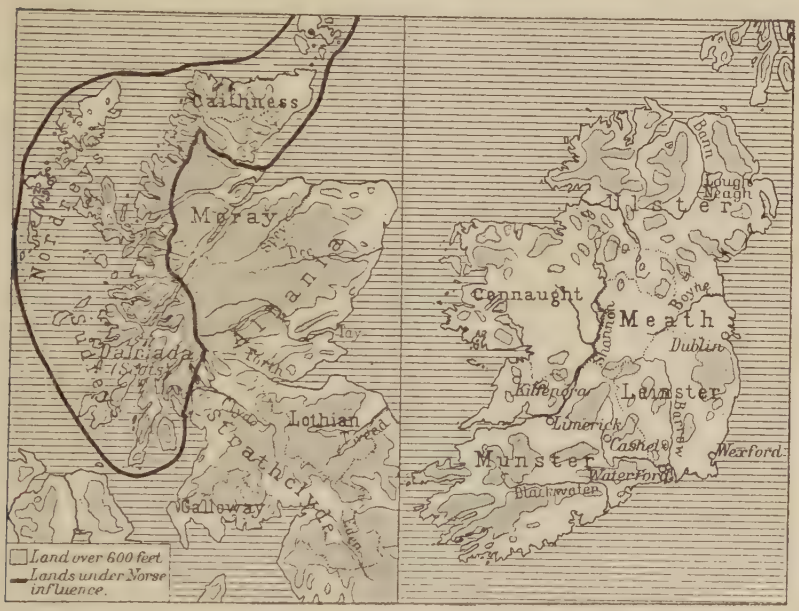

FIG. 7.—Scotland and Ireland.

his dominions, came over to ask for aid. Henry was too much occupied to give it, but authorised him to get help from his barons. Dermot found helpers among the Marcher Lords of Wales—now the most independent feudatories remaining in England. The leader of the expedition was Richard Clare, Earl of Pembroke, known as "Strongbow," who married Dermot's daughter, and on his death claimed to be king of Leinster. The Danes of Dublin and Waterford made common cause with the invaders, who very rapidly established their mastery over a considerable part of the country. In 1171 Henry

* School Atlas, Plate 37*c*.

himself visited Ireland, to bring Strongbow and his fellows under his control; took homage (which they did not understand) from most of the Irish chieftains; assumed the title Lord of Ireland, which was henceforward borne by all the English kings; and, in the hope of pleasing the Pope, held a Church council at Cashel, where the Irish Church was united to Rome. Later (1177) the Lordship of Ireland was transferred to the king's youngest son, John, who visited the island in 1185 and insulted the Irish chieftains. A justiciar represented the royal power, but Ireland had not by any means yet been effectively conquered. Nevertheless, Henry II was the first English king to rule, even in name, over Ireland.

The Rebellion of 1173–4. — Although Henry was engaged in frequent campaigns in his wide French dominions, he had singularly little trouble in England, which enjoyed a period of orderly peace such as she had not known since the time of Edgar. It was only once interrupted. In 1173 Louis VII of France, helped by Henry's rebellious sons, engineered a simultaneous rising in almost every part of the empire. William the Lion, king of Scots, joined in the attack; it was the beginning of a long alliance between France and Scotland. And a baronial rising in England was part of the great design. Henry dealt successfully with all his continental foes; while in England his faithful officials found no difficulty, with the aid of the shire-levies, in crushing the rebellious barons. This was the last baronial rising of the type which had been familiar since the conquest: thereafter the barons fought not to break up the power of the crown, but to control it. As for the Scottish invasion, William the Lion was defeated and captured at Alnwick by the lawyer-baron Ranulf Glanvill; and had to sign the Treaty of Falaise (1175), whereby he did homage to Henry for the whole realm of Scotland, and admitted English garrisons to Edinburgh and other Scottish fortresses. Thus Henry was the first king to hold sway over all the British Islands.

Final Rebellion.—The end of this great king was unhappy. He had intended to take part in the Third Crusade, for the recovery of Jerusalem, which set forth in 1189; and had for that purpose raised the Saladin Tithe—the first English tax on personal property as distinct from land. His plans were spoilt by a rebellion of his ungrateful sons, Richard and John. It broke his heart, and he died with a sense of failure. But the work he had done was imperishable.

2. Richard the Crusader: Henry II's System Tested (1189–1199)

The Knight-errant King. — Richard I, the ungrateful son who now succeeded to his great father, was a hero of tournaments, a troubadour, the finest fighting-man of his time, a figure of romance. He cared not at all for England. Out of the ten years of his reign, he spent only seven months in the country, and then only for the purpose of raising money. When he succeeded to the throne, he was eager to be off on crusade, and wanted all the money he could get to cut a dash. He spent a few months solely upon this business, caring not a jot about the work of government, but selling all the offices for which he could find buyers. For £10,000 he sold back to William the Lion of Scotland the independence of his realm. For £3,000 he sold the great offices of Justiciar and Chancellor to William Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, without considering whether he was fit to bear the responsibility of government. Then he flung off on crusade.

Richard's Adventures.—He was a magnificent crusader, the heart and soul of the crusading host.* When he reached Palestine he found the first contingents besieging Acre, and themselves beset by the host of the Emir Saladin. By prodigies of valour he captured Acre (1191); then, while Philip Augustus, king of France, gave up the crusade, and returned to make trouble among Richard's vassals, he set out to fight his way to Jerusalem. But the crusading host was melting, and Richard had to turn back when within sight of Jerusalem, having achieved nothing save a truce with Saladin that preserved a mere foothold in Palestine for the Christians. He had made many enemies; and as he returned across Germany, he was captured by a German duke whom he had insulted in the Holy Land, and kept in prison for a year—nobody in England knowing where he was. The Emperor Henry VI got possession of him, and only consented to release him on condition that he became the emperor's vassal, and that a ransom of £100,000—a colossal sum for those days—was paid for him by his English subjects. He returned to England only for a few months, to raise yet more money (1194); and then (demanding money at intervals) he spent the remaining five years

* School Atlas, Plate 13*a* and *c*. Scott's *Talisman* deals with the Crusade, and *Ivanhoe* with the period after Richard's return.

of his life in aimless fighting in France, against his suzerain or his rebellious vassals. His useless, brilliant life was ended by an arrow-shot while he was besieging the castle of Chaluz, near Limoges.

Significance of the Reign. — The chief importance of his reign was that it proved that England no longer depended upon the personality of her king. There could be no stronger proof of the value of Henry II's work than that it enabled the business of the country to be carried on under an absentee king, and that it made possible the raising of the huge sums which Richard spent, without arousing general revolt.

Troubles during the King's Absence.—It is true that Longchamp, the Justiciar who had bought his post, was a failure, and had to leave the country in 1191. His failure was made an excuse for revolt by Richard's treacherous brother John, who encouraged Philip Augustus to invade Normandy. But Longchamp's successor, Walter of Coutances, was able to suppress the revolt and to make Normandy secure, and was then able to raise the huge ransom demanded for the errant king : surely a remarkable tribute to the efficiency of government, and to its hold over the country.

Hubert Walter. — In Richard's last years he had the good sense to entrust the Justiciarship (1194) to Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was a nephew of Ranulf Glanvill, and had been trained in Henry II's school ; and under Hubert Walter things went, on the whole, well. It is true that the barons protested against the heavy taxation which the Justiciar had to impose ; but their protest was made constitutionally, in the Great Council, and their spokesman was the saintly Bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Avalon. What is more, the protest was effective : the tremendous engine of despotism which Henry II had built was beginning to be checked. Hubert Walter even made some improvements in Henry II's system. It was in his time that the shire-courts were first required to *elect* Coroners, to take charge of the pleas of the Crown, that is, to see that cases of murder, arson, or robbery were brought duly before the travelling justices.

The reign of Richard I was not wholly wasted. It proved the terrific power of Henry II's system, and it produced the first tentative endeavour to check its possible abuse. But now a further test was to be applied : this great engine of government fell into the hands of a thoroughly bad man.

3. John, and the Limitation of Absolutism (1199-1216)

The Loss of Normandy.—When Richard I died, there were two possible claimants to the succession: Arthur, son of Henry II's third son Geoffrey of Brittany, who had died in 1186; and John, the youngest of Henry II's sons. The Great Council chose John, who succeeded without opposition in England. But in the French dominions there were many supporters for Arthur; and Philip Augustus, king of France, seized the opportunity to weaken the formidable Angevin Empire. In 1202 he declared all John's French fiefs forfeited; and, while encouraging Arthur to attack Aquitaine and the south, he himself invaded Normandy. In Aquitaine John managed to hold his own; in 1202 he captured his nephew, whom he subsequently murdered. But in Normandy things went very badly. With inexplicable supineness, John looked on while fortress after fortress fell. By 1204 the whole of Normandy had been lost; and in the next two years Philip Augustus overran Anjou and Poitou. All the possessions of the English king in northern France were lost; and they were never to be regained, except for a brief period under Henry V.

Effects of the Loss of Normandy.—The loss of Normandy was an unmixed boon to England; and the readiness with which this severance was accepted on both sides of the Channel showed how loose the connection had become, thanks to the policy of the Norman kings. A purely English patriotism could now more easily grow up, even among the barons of Norman descent. The loss of Normandy was, of course, a very serious blow to John's prestige. Yet his power in England was not sensibly weakened. Thanks to the work of Henry II, and to the experience of Hubert Walter, the country remained undisturbed.

Quarrel with the Papacy.—But in 1205 Hubert Walter died; and a new archbishop had to be chosen. This led to the second great humiliation of John's reign—a disgraceful conflict with the Papacy. For while the monks of Canterbury chose one candidate and the king another, the Pope—Innocent III, the proudest and most masterful of all the mediæval Popes—selected and consecrated a third, without consulting John. Innocent's choice was a great and noble man, and a patriotic Englishmen, who was to earn undying fame by his part in the winning of Magna Carta—Stephen Langton. But John would not submit to this invasion of his prerogatives, and a

fierce conflict broke out, which lasted for seven years (1206–1213). The Pope laid England under an interdict (1208), which meant that every church was closed, and that there could be no burials in consecrated ground—a terrifying blow to a religious and superstitious people, for which they had to blame their king ; yet even this did not undermine his power. John replied by outlawing the clergy and seizing Church property wholesale ; the Pope rejoined first by excommunicating the king (1209), and then by declaring him deposed, and inviting his hated enemy Philip Augustus of France to take possession of his kingdom (1213). This brought the coward to heel. He made abject submission to the Pope, and not only agreed to accept Langton as archbishop, but consented to become the Pope's feudal vassal for the realm of England. This humiliation completed the alienation of the English, and aroused the nascent patriotism of barons and commonalty alike. But John was content. He thought he now had the Pope on his side ; and he wanted his aid for the reconquest of his lost French domains.

The Battle of Bouvines.—For this purpose he had planned a mighty confederation, which took effect in 1214 : its failure was the third great humiliation of his reign. He had made an alliance with his nephew the Emperor, Otto of Saxony, and with the Count of Flanders and other northern princes. They were to attack Philip Augustus from the north, while John was to lead a great army from Poitou and the south. But the great combination came to nothing. John himself shirked a fight at the crisis, at the castle of La Roche on the Loire. And meanwhile the northern allies had been defeated at Bouvines. The Battle of *Bouvines* (1214) was, in truth, one of the turning-point battles of history. It secured the greatness of France, which henceforth counted as the strongest power in Europe. And by completing the humiliation of John, it made Magna Carta possible. For if John had come back victorious from his French campaign, Magna Carta would probably never have been accepted, and the government of England, like that of France, might have been a despotism.

Resistance of the Barons.—While John was abroad, the barons, sick of his misgovernment, had been taking counsel together, under the lead of Stephen Langton, who produced Henry I's Charter of Liberties, and advised them to obtain a similar charter. At Bury St. Edmunds they met and agreed upon the points of a charter, and undertook to take up arms to compel the king's acceptance of it.

The barons of the north took the lead in this action—they retained a greater degree of independence than the rest. But when John tried to resist them, he found that the other barons would give him no aid. Always a coward, he gave way, and at a Great Council at Runnymede, on the Thames near Windsor, the most famous constitutional document in British history, Magna Carta, was presented to him for acceptance (June 15th, 1215).

Magna Carta.—To the student who has heard of Magna Carta as the foundation of English liberty, its actual provisions come as a disappointment. There is nothing very new or bold about it. It is full of minute feudal grievances that are to be redressed, and it is far more concerned about the rights of the privileged classes, the Church and the baronage, than about the rights of the people. The Church is to be "free." The barons are not to be forced to pay more than the customary feudal aids, abuses of wardship and marriage rights are to stop, and if any extra feudal aids are wanted from them, they must be consulted in the Great Council. There is no word about the protection of ordinary freemen from excessive taxation; still less is there any protection for villeins. In the main, Magna Carta is a feudal document.

Henry II's System Accepted.—It is significant, however, that there was no attempt to overthrow the system of Henry II. It was taken for granted. It had become an essential part of the life of the nation. Even the "petty assizes," whereby land questions were settled in the king's courts, were accepted. The only novelty was a requirement (Clause 17) that "common pleas," that is, cases between subjects, were to be heard in a fixed place, and were no longer to follow the royal court in its journeys: this meant that the *Curia Regis* was beginning to be decentralised.

The Liberty of the Subject.—With one outstanding exception, Magna Carta contains no general statements of principle, such as are to be found in other great constitutional documents. But the exception, contained in Clause 39, is notable. "*No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned or dispossessed or outlawed or banished or in any way destroyed, nor will we go upon him nor send upon him, except by the legal judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.*" Even this famous clause does not mean as much as appears at first sight. It refers only to "freemen"; and most Englishmen at this date were serfs. The "legal judgment of a man's peers" does not mean trial by jury, it means trial by men of the same feudal grade. And the

"law of the land" need not mean more than "the custom of the district." Nevertheless, this clause proclaims the sovereignty of law. It declares arbitrary imprisonment or punishment to be illegal; and when, as was often to happen in the future, the king, or other powerful men, abused their strength, they were guilty not merely of injustice but of illegality, which could be punished if government and the law-courts were strong enough. And Magna Carta as a whole, in spite of its limitations, deserves its reputation as the foundation-stone of English liberty. It placed limitations upon the enormous power of monarchy. It provided that the law, and not the arbitrary will of the king, should be supreme.

The Barons' War.—At the end of Magna Carta it was provided that twenty-five barons should be appointed as its guardians, and should be empowered to use force to compel the king to observe it. The provision was soon shown to be necessary. It was not in John's nature to abide by his word. He made haste to obtain from his suzerain the Pope a release from his oath. Thus backed, he was still so strong that he seemed likely to re-establish his power; and the barons had to invite the heir to the French crown to invade England and dethrone him. But this foreign intrusion aroused the nascent patriotism of the English. There is no knowing what would have happened if the bad king had not opportunely died (1216).

It was a stroke of good fortune for the British peoples that John was an irredeemably bad man and a coward, and that his heir was a child. If he had used his tremendous power with a reasonable degree of prudence, or if he had been succeeded by a strong man, the powerful engine of government which Henry I and Henry II had forged might have fixed the chains of despotism upon the limbs of the English people.

CHAPTER VI

THE ISLANDS IN 1216

The Melting-Pot.—We have reached the end of the first stage in our long story. The racial ingredients of which the British peoples are comprised had been brought into their places, and more or less blended: men of the Old Stone Age, of the New Stone Age, of

the Bronze Age, of the Iron Age ; men of the Mediterranean stock, of the Alpine stock, of the Nordic stock ; Iberians, Gaels, and Britons ; Angles, Saxons, and Jutes ; Norsemen and Danes ; and, finally, a top-dressing of Norman aristocrats. The composition and the limits of the Four Nations had been defined, and one of the four had been hammered by hard discipline into a nation. The influence of Europe and of Latin Christendom had been brought to bear upon the islands, and then the too intimate political connection with the Continent, having served its purpose, had been cut.

1. Wales, Ireland, and Scotland

Wales and Ireland. — Only England had yet been fully unified ; the other three nations were still in the process of crystallisation. In Wales the marcher lords, little controlled, ruled the south and east, leaving only Gwynedd fully Celtic ; there was to be a remarkable outburst of Welsh national sentiment in the next century. In Ireland there was a simmering chaos of Norman lordships and tribal chieftaincies ; Ireland needed, but never obtained, a stern discipline such as the Norman kings had given to England.

The Unification of Scotland.—In Scotland, on the other hand, the very discrepant elements out of which the Scottish nation was to be moulded were beginning to be welded together. In the far north (Caithness and Sutherland) and in the western isles the Norsemen still bore sway, and the great Celtic earldom of Moray was not effectively incorporated in the kingdom until the twelfth century. But Alban or Pictland and Scottish Dalriada had long been united ; British Strathclyde and English Lothian had been attached to the Scottish crown since the middle of the tenth century, and Lothian had been secured by the battle of *Carham* in 1018 : it was this English-speaking region which was the chief means of unifying Scotland.*

St. Margaret.—The process was quickened when Malcolm Canmore married an English wife, the beautiful, able, and pious St. Margaret, sister of Edgar the Atheling, who helped her work in his exile.† She Anglicised her Celtic chieftain of a husband, and brought about the union of the Scottish Church with Rome. Her

* School Atlas, Plate 37*a*.

† See Genealogical Table D, at the end of the volume.

three sons, successively kings, were English in sympathy, maintained close relations with their brother-in-law, Henry I, and laboured hard to bring Scotland out of the stage of tribalism. Norman nobles—Bruces, Balliols, Comyns—began to settle in Scotland.

David I.—The youngest of the brothers, David I (1124–1153), deserves the fame of being the founder of modern Scotland. Educated in England, he conceived a profound admiration for the Norman methods of government. He brought many Normans into the country, and granted them lordships ; he organised a shire system, appointed sheriffs, and modelled his court on the English *Curia Regis ;* perhaps most important of all, he gave his backing to the reform movement in the Church, and was the founder of many famous monasteries which became centres of civilisation : among them Melrose and Holyrood. David's grandsons, Malcolm the Maiden and William the Lion, continued the fight against Celtic and tribal traditions.

By 1216, therefore, the Scottish monarchy, though far behind England, had come into line with the rest of Europe. Scotland was still a disunited country ; the greater part of her area was still Celtic in language and customs. But the most important part of the country, the Lowlands, had become feudal and English-speaking. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries Strathclyde (the western Lowlands) had adopted the English tongue—a remarkable instance of a change of speech by a whole people without displacement of population.

2. The Cleavage between Norman and English

The outstanding feature of English social life in the century and a half which followed the Norman Conquest was the sharp cleavage between the ruling class of French-speaking barons and knights who held, as tenants of the king, four-fifths of the land of the country ; and the great mass of their English-speaking vassals and tenants. Only a few Englishmen were admitted to the ruling class, and they, for the most part, hastened to assimilate themselves to their Norman neighbours, and to speak French, which was now the language of respectability.

Armour and Castles.—The supremacy of the ruling class was secured by the military methods of the time. For the knightly class wore expensive armour, which gave them an immense superiority

over humbler folk. The elaborate plate-armour of a later period was, indeed, yet to come. The knight and the man-at-arms wore, as a rule, a hauberk of ring mail or, later, chain-mail, which was prolonged into a hood to protect the head and topped by a steel cap with a nose-piece ; mail also protected his legs, and he carried a shield of steel. Against men thus armed, and trained by constant practice in the use of the sword, the mace and the lance, plain folk in their leathern jerkins were practically defenceless. The supremacy of the ruling class was still more ensured by the massive stone fortresses with which the king and the greater barons dotted the country. Pre-Conquest England had never known anything like these grim keeps with their thick walls and their deep foundations, which were almost impregnable to any attack save starvation. The art of fortification developed rapidly during the twelfth century, and the greater castles of the latter part of that period were very elaborate structures.

Class Hatred.—There was no shaking off the mastery thus formidably secured. But many indications show how it was feared and hated by the mass of the people in the first century after the Conquest. The readiness with which freemen came out to join the national levy at the king's call when he had to deal with rebellious barons ; the rejoicings over the fall of such feudal tyrants as Robert of Bellême in Henry I's time ; the bitter complaints of the feudal tyranny which reigned in the time of Stephen—all these things show how the power of the foreign ruling class was resented. But the most significant sign of all was the institution of the *murdrum* fine by William I. This was a fine which was imposed upon a whole hundred when a dead body was found within the hundred, unless it could be proved not to be the body of a Norman. Evidently solitary Normans caught unawares in lonely places were apt to be killed ; and this was a method of trying to stop this practice.

The Cleavage Diminished. — But the bitterness of the cleavage gradually diminished ; and this was one of the happiest features of the period, giving promise of the rise of that national spirit, embracing both Normans and English, which was to grow to great strength in the thirteenth century. It is a sign of the change that in the later part of Henry II's reign the *murdrum* fine was being exacted in respect of all dead bodies whose slayers could not be traced ; because it was no longer possible to distinguish between Normans and Englishmen. This healthy change was due to several causes. It was due, in part, to the policy systematically pursued by the Norman

kings of punishing rebellious barons by depriving them either of their English or of their Norman lands ; with the result that, by the time of Henry II, the baronage in England, though still Norman, had all their interests in England. Still more it was due to the long periods of almost unbroken peace and firm, efficient government which England enjoyed under Henry I, and, again, from the accession of Henry II to the revolt of the barons against John : no other country in Europe enjoyed such peace. These kings were too shrewd not to recognise that the strongholds of their vassals were dangerous to them. They kept most of the great castles in their own hands, and allowed no new ones to be erected without licence, except in the turbulent borderlands of Scotland and Wales ; and when "adulterine" castles sprang up during the anarchy of Stephen, they were destroyed wholesale by Henry II. The result was that, in the later part of the period, the Castle ceased to be the characteristic abode of a feudal lord ; in its place the Manor-house is the characteristic building of the time—strong enough to resist a sudden raid, but not to withstand a siege. Finally, the racial cleavage was still more effectually healed by the legal system of Henry II, which brought Normans and Englishmen to work together in the service of a *common* law, in the shire-courts and on the juries which he so widely employed.

Influence of the Church.—The influence of the Church contributed powerfully towards the unification of the races. Although, immediately after the Conquest, most of the higher clergy were Normans, the rank and file remained English. Erelong this distinction disappeared ; the most famous archbishop of the period, Stephen Langton, was of purely English parentage ; and there was even an English Pope—Nicholas Breakspear, Adrian IV—during the reign of Henry II.

The English Language.—Even at the end of the period, however, the English language was still the despised tongue of the lower orders, while French was the language of the ruling class, and Latin the language of learning. The masters, however, naturally had to pick up the language of their servants, though (like the English in India) they would seldom trouble to speak it correctly. In fact, correct English was dying out, because English had almost ceased to be a written tongue : the English Chronicle, which had been kept going since Alfred, came to an end in the reign of Stephen. But this had one good result. Spoken mostly by uneducated people, the language lost its elaborate inflections, and became grammatically the

simplest of European tongues. It also became elastic, and readily absorbed new words. It was greatly enriched by borrowings from the French. To take a single, crude illustration, while the ox, the sheep, and the pig still kept their old names in the mouths of the herds who tended them, their flesh, when served at the master's table, had to be called bœuf, mouton, and porc. The time was soon coming when, under the influence of strong national feeling, this rich and flexible tongue would again become the medium of literature. When that happened, the English nation had truly come alive.

In short, the bitterness of the Conquest gradually and easily died out, thanks to the peace and good government which (apart from the anarchy of Stephen) a series of able rulers gave. England was in this respect perhaps the most fortunate country in Europe. With peace came some degree of prosperity. Already the name of "Merry England" was coming into use, and French writers of the twelfth century commented upon the gaiety and light-heartedness of the English.

3. The Manor and its Life

The Feudal Lord at Home.—The gradual assimilation of Norman masters and English subjects was greatly helped by the fact that the feudal lords necessarily spent most of their time on their estates. Because the land was so long at peace, they were seldom called out for war within its limits; private war between great barons was sternly checked, and the barons' vassals were forced to remember that their primary allegiance was due to the king. Even for foreign war, the minor barons and knights were not often called out, especially when, under the system of *scutage*, they were called upon for a money payment in lieu of service. Moreover, they had to live mainly on their manors, because their tenants paid them not in money but by work or by payments in kind: in the main, the produce of the manor had to be consumed on the spot by the lord and his retainers. So the lord spent most of his time among his vassals, in hunting, in looking after his estates, in taking his part in the growing activities of the shire-court; and he kept alive his knightly love of fighting mainly in the mimic warfare of tournaments.

The Manor.—The manor, therefore, was the real social unit of England; and each manor-community was very nearly self-sufficing. It had its manor-house, where the lord or his steward dwelt; it had its regular manor-courts, where disputes about the

rights and duties of the tenants were settled, and at which all were bound to attend and join in declaring the custom ; it had, as a rule, its church and its parsonage, the centre of such spiritual and intellectual life as it enjoyed. The extensive lands of the manor included the lord's demesne or home-farm, which was cultivated by the labour of his humbler vassals, who owed fixed services of so many days a week, and so many extra days at harvest, and who were paid by holdings of their own in the fields. Sometimes the demesne formed a separate block ; sometimes it was mingled with the holdings of the villagers in the great fields—every third or fourth strip belonging to the lord. The arable lands of the manor were usually divided into three great fields, one of which lay fallow in each year ; and in each field almost all the villagers had holdings, each having a number of scattered strips according to his standing. A few of the villagers would be "freemen," owing as a rule no services save attendance at the lord's court, and holding a larger amount of land. The great majority would be villeins, cottars, or serfs, who paid for their holdings by labour, and who could not leave the soil, being in some sense their lord's property, part of the livestock of the estate. Yet they too had their rights, guarded by the customs declared in the court and recorded in the rolls of the court, where these were kept.

Co-operative Work.—The great fields had to be co-operatively cultivated, each household contributing so much labour at ploughing-time and harvest-time, and supplying its quota to the ox-teams that drew the ploughs. There had to be a reeve to act as foreman for these operations ; there had to be haywards to put up the fences when the crops began to grow ; there had to be many village officers, who were chosen at the court. In its modest way, despite its subjection to its lord, the community of the manor was a co-operative, and in some degree a self-governing, society. Beyond the arable fields were the hay-meadows, in which each villager had his share ; beyond these again was the wide-spreading waste, often partly wooded, where the villagers had certain rights of pasture, rigidly defined ; and swine herds and shepherds had to be chosen to look after these beasts. The lord, of course, looked jealously to his hunting rights. He also had his mill, at which corn must be ground, and various other profitable rights.

Manorial Self-sufficiency.—These little communities were for most purposes nearly self-supporting : they lived on their own crops, and the meat from their own cattle, and the fish from their

own streams ; they wore clothing of home-tanned leather, or home-spun cloths made from the wool of their own sheep ; they warmed themselves with wood or peat taken from their own waste ; they lived in huts made from their own wattles, timber, or clay. Apart from the little luxuries wanted at the manor-house, and perhaps by the more prosperous freemen, they needed little from without save (in most cases) salt, and iron for their ploughs and mattocks, and

Permanent Pasture
Green Commons
Lammas Meadows
Rotation of Crops
The allocation of the fields for the 3 main crops in a given year is shown thus:
Tilth Grain
Etch Grain
Fallow
The messuage and 30 scattered Acres of a Typical Virgate or Yardland are shown thus
Bury Field
Welshman's Croft
Spital Field
Burford Field
Mole-mead or Hill Grove Field
Scale . 1 Mile
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 Furlongs

FIG. 8.—The Village Community.

spices to preserve their meat for the winter, and possibly salted fish for use in Lent. When the crops failed, they were very apt to starve. They made little use of money. They knew little of the outer world, save what might percolate to them from the manor-house, or from some travelling monk or priest. But they had some contact with the life of the nation when, at regular intervals, the reeve, the priest, and four men had to trudge along the muddy tracks to represent the township in the shire-court at the county-town, or in the nearer hundred-court. And, now and then, the freemen might be called on to render service in the national levy ; in preparation for which they had to be equipped with arms according to their wealth, as laid down in Henry II's Assize of Arms.

4. Growth of Trade and Towns

Growing Trade.—Because the king's peace had almost put an end to the devastations of war (which had been incessant in the pre-Conquest era) prosperity was gradually increasing ; the cultivated area was being enlarged at the expense of the wide wastes and forests ; there were bigger margins of grain and wool and hides to sell in the little market centres ; and trade slowly grew. There was an increasing demand for foreign luxuries, wine and spices and fine stuffs and furs and jewels. Trade grew all the more because of the constant coming and going between England and her king's foreign domains, and because of the new routes of commerce with the East which had been opened up by the Crusades.

The Jews.—Large numbers of Jews settled in England to play the part of bankers and money-lenders, advancing ready money to knights and freemen on the security of their crops or of their land. The Jews were unpopular, because they charged high rates of interest for these accommodations ; and they sometimes suffered " pogroms." But they were under the king's protection. They were useful to him, since he constantly needed advances in anticipation of the returns from his feudal dues or other sources of revenue ; and they could pay for his protection.

Foreign Trade.—All the most lucrative branches of foreign trade were in the hands of foreigners. A few Italians from Venice, Pisa, and Genoa (the cities which controlled the traffic with the East) were reaching England : we still give the name of " Italian merchants " to those who supply us with the spices of the East. Many French merchants brought wine and other goods from the king's French domains. But the chief controllers of English foreign trade were the enterprising traders of the North German and Flemish towns. Already in the twelfth century they maintained in London a headquarters establishment, known as the Steelyard, which was the principal centre of foreign trade. They came mainly to exchange various foreign goods for English wool. For England was becoming the Australia of the Middle Ages, and her wool was in great demand in the busy manufacturing towns of Flanders—Bruges, Ghent, and Ypres. The king levied customary dues on all the wool and hides taken out of the country, and this formed a large part of his revenue.

Fairs and Markets.—He took toll also on the imported dues which the foreigners brought into the country. These were dis-

tributed mainly in great annual fairs, such as those of Winchester and Stourbridge, to which the humble local merchants came from all the English trading-centres. The lords of these fairs took toll on the trade that went on in them, and special courts—courts of pie-powder (pieds poudrés, dusty-feet) were held to settle promptly the disputes of the travelling traders. When they got back to their own towns, there were, of course, more dues to be paid in the weekly markets, whereby these goods were distributed to their final consumers.

Growth of Towns.—The growth of trade involved the growth of towns. London was, indeed, the only big trading town in England. But Bristol and Southampton, King's Lynn and Hull, Dover and the other Cinque ports on the Kentish coast, were growing in importance. In general, the inland towns of England were merely bigger villages, busy with agriculture except on the weekly market-day, and usually dominated by the castles or abbeys of their powerful neighbours whose encouragement had brought them into existence. Town-life had, of course, been slowly growing in England long before the Conquest ; but it grew much more rapidly in the period of peace and of extending foreign trade which followed the Conquest. The Norman and Angevin kings encouraged its growth by freely granting charters—often modelled on the usages of French towns—to towns on the royal demesne, and many lords imitated their example, because a market-town was profitable to the lord on whose land it stood.

The Free Borough.—The first step in the development of a town was its recognition as a "free borough," which meant that its burgesses were not required to pay any dues or services other than a fixed money-rent for their "burgage"-tenements. So free was a borough thus recognised that if a serf could manage to remain in it for a year and a day, he became a free man. Then came the grant, to the burgesses, of freedom from the payment of tolls in the town (tolls being still paid by those who came in to buy or sell). In favoured towns this freedom from tolls extended throughout the king's dominions. In many towns the burgesses organised themselves as a self-governing Gild Merchant. Such a gild often obtained a monopoly of trading rights—for money down ; and if either the gild or the body of burgesses could rent from the king all his rights in the town, by paying a fixed annual sum, the town became a very free and self-governing place. All over England little self-governing communities of this sort, half trading and half agricultural, were

springing into being. As we shall see, they were soon to be recognised as an essential factor in the nation's life. Within fifty years of King John's death, they were to be represented in Parliament, as distinct communities standing apart from the feudal order.

5. Civilisation and the Church

Architecture. — The growing prosperity of the country was reflected in a rapid development of the arts, and especially of architecture, in which the Normans took supreme delight. Very few architectural monuments of the pre-Conquest period survive, but many of the greatest architectural glories of England descend to us from the century and a half following the Conquest. The noble Westminster Hall, perhaps the most splendid edifice of its kind in Europe, which was to be, through the centuries, the chief centre of English law and government, was built in its first form by William Rufus. The Tower of London, built by William I to overawe the unruly city, was the prototype of many grim fortresses of stone whereby the Normans held down the country. But the greatest achievement of the time was the construction of many noble cathedrals and abbeys, upon which skilful builders were constantly at work. They were built in the massive Norman style, with its solid pillars, round arches, and conventional decorations. The cathedrals of Durham and Norwich belong to the pure Norman period. During the twelfth century the builders began to aim at greater lightness and freer decoration, as in the cathedrals of Peterborough and Ely ; and at the opening of the thirteenth century the Norman style was passing into the Gothic, with its pointed arches, and soaring, vaulted roofs. The first truly Gothic pile in England—the choir of Lincoln cathedral—was erected by the saintly Bishop Hugh of Lincoln, who led the opposition in the Great Council to the exactions of Richard I.

Other Arts.—With architecture came sculpture, for tombs and the images of saints. Many fine sculptures descend to us from this period, though their style was still stiff and conventional ; the next century was to see a great advance. Painting also was cultivated, and the wide wall-spaces of Norman churches were often covered with frescoes, which have now mostly vanished. The delicate art of the miniaturist was being practised in the manuscripts produced by the scribes in many monasteries. Stained glass also was made, though

only one specimen of Norman glass (in Canterbury Cathedral) survives to-day. Under the shelter of peace and good government, the arts were beginning to thrive.

Literature. — It was the same with letters and learning. Several valuable chroniclers were at work recording the events of their time during the first two generations following the Conquest. But there was an almost complete cessation of this activity during the anarchy of Stephen, when the English Chronicle came to an end. The good government of Henry II brought about a remarkable revival. Not only were there a number of excellent chronicles ; there were valuable law-treatises, such as the *Dialogue on the Exchequer*, and a text-book on the laws and customs of England, written by the Norman baron, Ranulf de Glanvill—the earliest book on the English constitution ; there were satires like those of Walter Map ; there were romances and poems, for this was the age of the troubadours. In short, there was a general stirring of intellectual life, preparing the way for the intellectual renascence of the next century.

Influence of the Church.—Of all this activity the Church was obviously the centre. She was the patroness of all the arts, and the sole fosterer of learning. In every township, the parish priest, whatever his limitations, was the one reminder that there was something beyond the endless drudgery of the fields, and often he could protect the peasants from the tyranny of their lord by threatenng him with the anger of the Church. The unseen world was very real to the mediæval man, knight and peasant alike ; saints and devils, the powers of good and evil, seemed to be constantly at work around him ; he walked in dread of these unseen powers ; and the Church, which knew their secrets, wielded a tremendous influence. There was something august and awful even about the humble parish priest, who could perform daily the miracle of the mass. In national affairs, the Church was the one great power which was more or less independent of the feudal hierarchy. It was wealthy, owning one-fifth of the land ; but that was not the secret of its strength. It wielded a mysterious God-given power over the minds and consciences of men, and perhaps even over the forces of Nature ; it could release men from their obligations to their lay lords, but nothing could release them from their obligations to itself. Hence it could not be disregarded by even the most powerful kings, as Henry II learnt to his cost in the case of Becket. The popular veneration which was long paid to the shrine of that obstinate priest who had

dared to defy the king sprang not so much from sympathy for the cause for which he stood as from respect for the freedom of the Church, and for the way in which, upon the whole, it used its power.

The Monasteries.—Of all the activities of the Church, perhaps the most remarkable were those of the monasteries. After the Conquest there was a remarkable activity in the foundation of monasteries. More than a hundred were founded in Stephen's reign—perhaps because men sought sanctuaries of refuge from the anarchy ; more than a hundred more were founded under Henry II. They were richly endowed with lands by the pious generosity of the faithful ; and on the whole they used their wealth well, and were good landlords. A large proportion of these new foundations belonged to the Cistercian order—the order of the great St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who dominated Europe in the early twelfth century. The Cistercians believed in hard work, and loved to plant their houses in lonely places. Some of their greatest foundations were in Yorkshire, which they helped to recover from the Conqueror's devastation. They did much for sheep-breeding on the uplands, and thus made an important contribution to the wealth of England. But the monasteries did far greater services than these. Some of them kept chronicles, or made copies of good books. Many of them maintained schools. They kept the light of learning alive. They gave hospitality to the traveller, and alms to the poor. No doubt some of the monks were greedy and self-indulgent, and often broke their "triple vow" of poverty, chastity, and obedience. But they made an invaluable contribution to the civilisation of a rude people. The monasteries were islands of peaceful industry and learning in a rough and hard world.

Monastic Buildings. — Although there were differences between the various "orders," the life of all monasteries was much alike, and their buildings reflected their activities. Each was dominated by a great chapel, on the buildings of which their wealth was lavished. It was the centre of the monks' life : here they all gathered, every few hours during the day and night, for religious services ; and as the monastery bell rang out over the fields, it was a reminder that "man's chief end is to glorify God." Usually on the south side of the chapel was the covered cloister, surrounding a square grassy garth. It was the scene of many activities : the hum of schoolboys' lessons at one side, the scratching of the scribes' pens at the other, went on all day. The cloister was surrounded by other

buildings : a chapter house (usually on the east side) where discipline was daily administered ; a refectory, always on the side most remote from the chapel ; dormitories for the monks and the lay brothers ; guest-chambers for the traveller ; often a library ; and many other

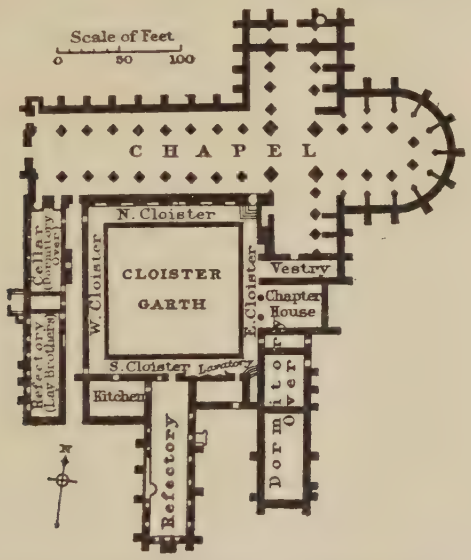

FIG. 9.—Monastic Buildings. (Beaulieu Abbey.)

offices. The plan of an Oxford or Cambridge college, surrounding its quadrangle or court, roughly reproduces the arrangements of a monastery.

The Universities.—Indeed, the universities themselves were a sort of offshoot of the monastic movement, and owed their existence to the Church. Already, in this period, Oxford had begun to be a centre of learning, though it did not yet rival the great continental universities of Paris, Bologna, and Salerno. Some teaching was going on at Oxford as early as Stephen's reign ; and in Henry II's reign it became important, when in 1167 a number of English students migrated from Paris. By 1209 Cambridge also had begun to provide teaching.

Thus, thanks partly to the king and his lawyers, still more to the Church, England entered upon the next stage in her history as a unified State equipped with the apparatus of civilisation. She was

ready to take advantage of the great movements of the thirteenth century, which was the age of St. Francis and the friars, of the universities, of the noblest architecture, and of the rise of representative institutions in all the countries of the West. Because she had been welded into unity, and was relatively free from the devastations of war, she was to draw from some of these movements even greater advantage than the other European peoples.

Supplementary Reading on Book I

Muir's *Short History of the British Commonwealth*, of which this book is an abridgment, deals rather briefly with the subject-matter of Book I. Trevelyan's *History of England* is excellent—full, vivid, and imaginative—on all this early period, which is treated amply at the expense of later periods. Green's *Short History* is still a classic, and full of inspiration, though not to be followed on the earliest periods. Maitland's *English Constitutional History* contains, in its first fourteen pages, a résumé of the constitutional development of the period by the hand of a master. J. W. Jeudwine's *First Twelve Centuries of British History* contains many good descriptive passages, and is well illustrated. For social and economic history, the *Piers Plowman* series (Book I, by J. J. Bell) is excellent. Keatinge and Fraser's *Documents of British History* (87—1216) provide much valuable material. For more advanced work Oman's *England before the Norman Conquest* and H. W. C. Davis' *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings* are the best general books. On special points students who are interested should consult Barnard's *Companion to Mediæval History*, which deals with such subjects as architecture, armour, costume, heraldry, etc. Traill's *Social England* (6 vols, illustrated edition) contains many useful short articles on particular subjects by specialists. Useful short books on special subjects are Monro's *Prehistoric Britain* (Home University Library), Rhys's *Celtic Britain*, Mawer's *The Vikings* (Cambridge Manuals), Stubbs' *Early Plantagenets* (Epochs of Modern History), Cardinal Gasquet's *English Monastic Life*, C. M. Andrews' *Old English Manor*.

BOOK II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUR NATIONS

(1216–1485)

FIG. 10.—England in the Middle Ages.

BOOK II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOUR NATIONS (1216–1485)

HAVING traced the moulding of the Four Nations of the Islands, we have next to follow their development down to the period when the Renascence, the Reformation, and the Opening of the Seas combined to mark a new era in British history, and indeed in human history.

In the events of this period England still played the dominating part, not only because she was the biggest and the richest of the four nations, but still more because she was the best consolidated, and because, more than any other people in Europe, her people were now inspired by the national spirit. The national spirit found expression in the development of self-governing institutions, both local and national ; and the growth of this system, which was to be England's most marked characteristic, and her greatest gift to the world, must occupy the forefront of our narrative. It grew so rapidly that there was a set-back at the end of the period ; nevertheless it had struck its roots deep into the soil. The national spirit also led the English to attempt conquests at the expense of their neighbours. They conquered little Wales, but without destroying its separate existence. They failed to conquer Ireland, merely reducing it to chaos. They strove to conquer Scotland, but only succeeded in arousing Scottish national sentiment. They tried to conquer France, but were driven forth, after having made France also conscious of her nationhood. In the next era the disclosure of new worlds was to open a healthier field for this ebullient nationalism. But the character of British expansion, when at last it began, was determined by the habits and traditions of self-government which were formed during the period we have now to study.

CHAPTER VII

THE RISE OF NATIONAL SENTIMENT IN ENGLAND (1216–1272)

1. The Minority of Henry III (1216–1234)

The Expulsion of the French.—When John died, civil war was raging in England. The heir to the French crown (afterwards Louis VIII), supported by a large party of the barons, held a great part of south-eastern England. On the other side were ranged some of the greater barons, large forces of foreign mercenaries whom John had hired, and to whose leaders (such as Falkes de Breauté) he had given castles and lands and many sheriffdoms, and finally the great influence of the Pope, now suzerain of England, who was represented by a legate, Gualo. The heir to the throne, Henry III, was a child of nine, who obviously could not rule. After a hurried crowning at Gloucester, the barons of the royalist party elected the greatest among them, William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, to be Regent (*Rector Regis et Regni*). His main work was to get rid of the foreign invaders, and to pacify and unify the kingdom. He had to work with a group of leading men—a small council, of which the chief members were the legate, the justiciar Hubert de Burgh (an official trained in the school of Henry II, and a good soldier as well as a sound administrator), and the warlike Bishop of Winchester, Peter des Roches, who (himself a foreigner) was the spokesman of the foreign mercenaries. The work was well done ; and there is no doubt that in this crisis the influence of the papal legate was of very great value—perhaps it saved the realm. The Regency cut away the ground from beneath the feet of the other party by promptly reissuing Magna Carta, with certain modifications. As the fight for Magna Carta had been the primary cause of the rebellion, this brought many of the barons, and the weight of popular feeling, to the king's side. The cause of Louis and the recalcitrant barons rapidly collapsed. They were defeated at *Lincoln* (1217) ; and a brilliant naval victory won by Hubert de Burgh off *Sandwich*, by preventing the landing of French reinforcements, completed their ruin. By the Treaty of Lambeth, 1217, Louis gave up his claims ; the barons of his party were leniently treated, and the civil war was over.

Hubert de Burgh Restores Order.—But there was still much work to be done. The system of government had to be got back into working order after the confusion. The foreign mercenaries and their dangerous power had to be got rid of; and the excessive influence of the papal legate had to be removed. This work mainly fell to the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, for William Marshall died in 1219. Hubert was an able and resolute man, who did good service to England. He was constantly hampered by Peter des Roches, the friend of the foreign mercenaries; but he was greatly aided by the archbishop, Stephen Langton, who persuaded the Pope to withdraw the legate—Gualo's successor, Pandulf, who had been very troublesome. The Pope still claimed, and received, an annual tribute from England as feudal superior; but he no longer tried to govern the realm through his representative. It was not until 1224 that Hubert got rid of the last of the mercenaries, and won control over the castles in which they had entrenched themselves. In that year Falkes de Breauté's castle of Bedford was stormed, its garrison was hanged, and Falkes was expelled from the realm. At last England was free of foreign control. The struggle against these influences—against Prince Louis and his Frenchmen, against the mercenaries, and against the papal legate—had done a great deal to quicken the national spirit of the English.

De Burgh and des Roches.—In 1227 Henry III was declared of age—he was then twenty years old. But Hubert de Burgh continued to govern until 1232, when Peter des Roches came back from Crusade and won the young king's favour. Hubert was most unjustly expelled, and for two years—until the barons and the saintly Archbishop Edmund Rich insisted upon his removal—the insolent and violent Bishop of Winchester governed England. In 1234 he fell, and Henry III took the reins of power into his own hands. That ends the first period of the reign.

King's Council and Parliament.—During this period two important things had happened. In the first place, a new body called the King's Council, the ancestor of the Privy Council, had risen into importance. The *Curia Regis* of Henry II, with its multifarious judicial work, was being specialised into a series of law-courts, served by able professional lawyers: one of these, an Englishman named Bracton, after spending his life in this kind of work, wrote a classical book on the legal system in the middle of Henry III's reign. But an executive council was also needed; and it was from the

informal co-operation of a group of magnates during the minority that it took shape. The second striking change was that the Great Council of the barons, which in this period began to call its meetings Parliaments or Discussions, assumed a new importance. It had elected the Regent. It insisted upon being consulted in regard to the appointment of the great officials, and the idea even grew up that it ought to have a voice in the appointment of the King's Council. In particular, it always had to be consulted in regard to the raising of aids and scutages and other feudal taxes. It met constantly, and sometimes its sessions lasted for many days or even weeks. And, quite insensibly, a new element was beginning to be included in it. Magna Carta had ordained that to meetings of the Great Council the "greater barons" should be summoned individually, and the "lesser barons" through the sheriffs. But it was now almost impossible to distinguish between "lesser barons" (who were immediate tenants of the king) and ordinary knights: they all shared in the work of the shire-court. Accordingly, to some meetings—notably in 1225—"knights of the shire," elected in the shire-courts, were summoned, because they would have to pay part of the aids imposed by the "Parliament." This precedent was followed several times in the next period. Thus *Parliament* was quietly coming into existence. It was still regarded as a purely feudal body. But it was claiming powers (practised during the minority) which Henry II would never have tolerated. "Limited monarchy" was beginning; and Henry III was soon to find, when he tried to establish personal power, that he had to count with "Parliament"—all the more because his government was very incompetent.

2. The Personal Government of Henry III (1234–1258)

The Civilisation of the Thirteenth Century.—It is important to realise that this era of royal misgovernment and constitutional upheaval was also a very great age in the development of English civilisation. The reign of Henry III was perhaps the noblest period of English Gothic architecture: Westminster Abbey, which Henry himself began to rebuild in 1245, and Salisbury Cathedral, are examples of it, and in all parts of the country the builders and the sculptors were at work. There was also afoot a remarkable religious revival, due to the coming of the begging friars. The Dominicans or preaching friars came to England in 1221, and

the Franciscans (followers of St. Francis of Assisi *) in 1224 : they settled in the poorest quarters of the towns and, unlike the monks, devoted themselves to preaching and teaching and helping the poor. They did great work also in the Universities, where they opened houses for poor scholars. Oxford, in this period, had become one of the greatest centres of learning in Europe. Robert Grosseteste, one of the most learned men of his age, and afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was Master of the Schools at Oxford in the early years of Henry III ; Roger Bacon, the greatest man of science of the Middle Ages, a man at least three centuries ahead of his time, was also an Oxford man ; and some of the most distinguished scholars of the time, Hales, Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, and others, all taught at Oxford. The Oxford students were an important factor in the nation's life, and even played an active part in the coming troubles, in which they were ardent supporters of the popular cause. It was an age, too, of great chroniclers ; and in Matthew Paris of St. Albans, who wrote the history of England to 1258, England could boast the most vivid historian of the Middle Ages. Monk though he was, Matthew Paris was an intensely patriotic Englishman, and followed the constitutional struggle with the keenest interest. Finally, it was in this period that English literature came alive. There was a stream of poems and satires in English which showed that the nation was no longer merely submissive, but was tingling with life, and full of national patriotism.

Henry III.—It was no easy matter to guide this ebullient life, and Henry III was not the man to do it. He was a volatile, unstable man who could never be relied upon ; not a bad man like his father, but a man without balance or judgment, capable of committing himself to fantastic enterprises at one moment and forgetting them the next ; incapable of steadfastness or moderation, and always under the influence of agreeable flatterers. But he was sincerely religious, and had strong artistic tastes. In a sense, he was the first English king since the Conquest. He had been born after the loss of Normandy, had been educated wholly in England, and only paid brief and occasional visits to his foreign dominions. On the other hand, his tutors had been Frenchmen, and he habitually spoke French. For that reason he liked the cultivated society of the foreigners to

* There is a short life of St. Francis by G. K. Chesterton. Laurence Housman's *Little Plays of St. Francis* give a good idea of the Franciscan spirit.

whom he gave his favour. Nevertheless, he was proud of his Anglo-Saxon ancestors, and revived the old English names of Edward and Edmund for his sons. So the king himself had some share in the growth of English nationalism, which was a feature of his reign.

Foreign Favourites.—Henry's personal government, which lasted twenty-four years, was in every respect a disastrous failure; and this made a change in the system of government inevitable. He tried to do without the great officials who had been so powerful since Henry II's time: the great office of the Justiciar, in particular, disappeared; later the barons stipulated, in the Provisions of Oxford, that it should be revived, but it never was revived, and the Chancellor became the chief officer of State. What especially aroused public discontent was the readiness with which Henry welcomed foreigners to his court, and the lavishness with which he bestowed upon them English lands and offices. In 1236 he married a princess of Savoy (on the borders of France and Italy), and several of the Queen's relatives came like leeches to suck wealth from England—one of them, Boniface of Savoy, was made Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1242–1243 (after a previous failure in 1230) Henry made an attempt to reconquer his father's lost lands in Poitou.* He was shamefully defeated at the battle of *Taillebourg*, and Poitou and other lands were finally lost. This brought ruin to the family of Lusignan, barons of Poitou, into which Henry's mother had married after John's death; they came trooping to England, and Henry was very generous to them at the expense of the English people.

Simon de Montfort.—Nor were these the only foreigners. Among others, Simon de Montfort, † son of the valiant and cruel noble who had drowned the Albigensian heresy of southern France in blood, came to claim the earldom of Leicester in right of his grandmother. His claim was granted. He married the king's sister, widow of William Marshall's son, and thus became connected with the English baronage; he also made a close friendship with Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, who was a sort of leader of opposition in the Great Council. Most of the foreigners were as insolent as they were greedy. They had no understanding of English methods, and abused the offices conferred upon them. Simon de Montfort

* See School Atlas, Plate 33*a*. There is a much more detailed map in the larger Atlas, Plates 24–25.

† There is a Life of Simon de Montfort by G. W. Prothero.

seems to have been an exception. For a time he lived on his estates in England. Then (1248) he was sent to govern the remnant of the king's foreign dominions in Gascony. His hard but efficient rule probably saved Gascony ; but the king showed no gratitude and sent no aid ; and Simon came back to England in 1254 deeply offended. This quarrel was to have momentous results.

Resentment against the Papacy.—The swarms of foreign locusts aroused deep grumbling among barons and people, all the more so since government was inefficient and taxation heavy ; and hatred of foreigners is a powerful stimulant to national feeling. But even deeper resentment was aroused by the king's subservience to the Papacy. The king and the Pope, vassal and suzerain, formed a sort of alliance against the English Church and people. The Pope supported the king with his immense spiritual authority ; in return the king gave the Pope a free hand to mulct the Church. Papal exactions reached an intolerable level in these years, because the Popes were engaged in a life and death struggle for the control of Italy against the Emperor Frederick II and his successors.* These exactions took two forms : first, direct taxation of the Church by the Pope ; and, secondly, the appointment (for a consideration) of swarms of foreign clergy to English benefices : the foreign appointees frequently neglected their duties, but never their revenues. This aroused intense opposition among both churchmen and laymen : a secret society was actually formed by a number of English knights to resist the payment of tithes and other dues to foreigners. Much of the anger aroused by these things was turned against the king, because, instead of protecting the Church, he seemed to support and encourage the exactions of the Pope. Now began a current of resentment against the Papacy among the English, which reached a high pitch in the Wycliffite movement of the next century.

The Crown of Sicily.—All this anger against the wasting of English wealth on foreigners reached its culmination when in 1254 the king accepted from the Pope, for his younger son Edmund, the barren title of King of Sicily, and pledged the resources of the kingdom to find the means for conquering Sicily from its Hohenstauffen rulers. This was a mad adventure, which never came to anything, for Henry could never find the means even to begin the enterprise, though great sums were sent from the English exchequer to the

* For this struggle, see School Atlas, Plate *25b*.

Pope. Nor was this all. The king's brother, Richard Earl of Cornwall, was the papal candidate for the Empire and the kingship of Germany (1257). He never achieved any mastery in Germany. But he squandered his wealth, and that of his English tenants, in futile enterprises; and though his outlay did not come from taxes, it still came from England. On all sides England was being bled for the advantage of foreigners, Savoyard and Poitevin favourites, foreign clerics, papal adventures in Italy, and faithless nobles in Germany.

Parliamentary Opposition.—All through this period of misgovernment, there were incessant "parliaments" of the Great Council, frequent demands for reissues of Magna Carta, vehement protests against foreigners, and numerous schemes for reform—more particularly, suggestions that the king's ministers and Council should be controlled by the Great Council. In 1242 the Council went so far as flatly to refuse grants to the king for his French war. But the opposition lacked vigorous leadership, until Simon de Montfort came back from Gascony (1254), full of his grievances. He was a very able man, probably honest, certainly ambitious, but inclined to be domineering. In a short time he made himself the leader of the forces of opposition; and though many of the barons distrusted him, the more active elements in the nation, such as the citizens of London and the eager, turbulent students of Oxford, increasingly learnt to look to him as the hope of reform. It is surprising that in an age which was learning to hate foreigners, the foreign Earl Simon should make himself the first of English national leaders and heroes.

3. Simon de Montfort and the Barons' War (1258–1267)

The Provisions of Oxford.—In 1258, gathered in what the king's friends called "the Mad Parliament" at Oxford, the barons forced the king to accept a new scheme of government, called "the Provisions of Oxford." A committee of twenty-four, drawn half from each side, was to devise a scheme of reform. A Council of Fifteen, appointed by the Twenty-four, was to carry on the government, the king pledging himself not to do anything contrary to their advice. And, three times a year, the Fifteen were to have a "parliament" or discussion with twelve of the barons. This was a purely baronial scheme, which would, if it had lasted, have saddled England with a baronial oligarchy. It was also unworkable. The three

bodies easily fell to cross-purposes, and all three were filled entirely with great barons. Earl Simon was a member of all three, and for the next five years his was the controlling voice in the government of England.

Prince Edward and the Royalist Party.—But a cleavage soon appeared among the barons. Earl Simon quarrelled with his principal colleague, the powerful Earl of Gloucester. Moreover, the king's eldest son, Prince Edward, began to take a hand in the game. He was now twenty years old, and had been made Duke of Gascony and Earl of Chester—this earldom, the last of the palatinates of the Conquest period, having fallen into the hands of the crown.* With much astuteness, Edward took the side of the knights, who were complaining that, for all their talk, the barons were not carrying out any real reforms ; the barons were forced to issue the Provisions of Westminster (1259), which made substantial concessions to their tenants. Thus a progressive royalist party was growing up. Its chief strength was drawn from the Marcher Lords of Wales, who were alarmed at the progress that was being made by Llywelyn, Prince of North Wales ; and Edward (who, as Earl of Chester, was the greatest of Marcher Lords) was their natural leader. By 1263 a strong royalist party had been reconstituted.

Peace with France.—Meanwhile Earl Simon had driven the foreign favourites out of the country. He had also insisted upon the conclusion of a treaty of peace with France, with whom a definite peace had never been concluded since the loss of Normandy. By the *Treaty of Paris*, 1259, Henry III abandoned all claim to Normandy and the other northern lands which his father had held ; and henceforth the English territories in France were limited to Gascony, in the extreme south-west.†

The Mise of Amiens and the Battle of Lewes.—The king had made an ineffectual attempt to revolt against his masters in 1261. But by 1263 his party had been reconstituted, and civil war seemed inevitable. The forces on both sides seemed, however, to be so evenly balanced that it was decided to refer the matter to arbitration ; and the king of France, St. Louis (IX), was asked to arbitrate. He was a just man, but all his prejudices were on the side of monarchy. In the Mise of Amiens (1264) he gave his award :

* For this, and for all that follows, see School Atlas, Plate 34.

† See School Atlas, Plate 33*a* ; also larger Atlas, Plates 24–25.

the king was bound by Magna Carta, but the Provisions of Oxford were derogatory to royalty, and could not be binding. Earl Simon and his party refused to accept this award—thereby breaking their word ; and the Barons' War began. Its first phase was short. At the Battle of *Lewes* (May 1264) Henry III was defeated by Earl Simon, and forced to accept the Mise of Lewes, whereby Earl Simon and two others were empowered to nominate a Council. In effect, however, de Montfort acted as dictator ; the king was in his hands ; Prince Edward also was a prisoner.

The Parliament of 1265—The dictatorship of Earl Simon lasted for less than a year and a half, and it was never securely established. But during its course a momentous thing happened. In January 1265, Earl Simon summoned a parliament of his supporters. Only a few bishops and barons attended. They were supplemented by knights from the shires, as in several recent parliaments. But besides the knights, de Montfort summoned two burgesses from each of a number of boroughs favourable to his cause. This was the beginning of borough representation ; the beginning also, it may fairly be said, of the House of Commons, which is the House of Communes or Communities, representing the communities of shires and boroughs.

Fall of de Montfort.—In the same year (1265) Prince Edward escaped from captivity ; and gathering up the forces of the Lords Marcher, he caught the Dictator with inferior forces at *Evesham* (August). There Simon de Montfort was defeated and killed, and his experiment in government came to an end. It is hard to form a confident judgment about him. He was long revered by the people : "the flower of all knighthood," "the impregnable tower of liberty," he was called in the popular literature of the time. A bad man does not leave such a reputation. And whether Earl Simon was disinterested or not, it is certain that he helped to bridle the monarchy, teaching it a lesson not to be forgotten ; that he gave some expression to the rising national spirit of the English ; and that he contributed to the growth of Parliament. His work, indeed, died with him ; but his conqueror, Prince Edward, was teachable, and had been watching these experiments.

The End of the Reign.—Two more years passed ere the last embers of the baronial rising were stamped out : the last resistance was in the Isle of Ely, where Hereward had held out two centuries before. The royal authority was fully restored ; and the last years

of Henry III (1267–1272) were so quiet that Prince Edward thought it safe to go off upon a Crusade for the defence of the Holy Land. He was still away when his father died; he did not return until 1274; yet there was no trouble or friction.

CHAPTER VIII

AN AGE OF DEFINITION (1272–1330)

1. Edward I and the Organisation of the Nation

Edward I.*—The great king who now succeeded to the English crown at the age of thirty-three has left a more indelible mark upon English institutions and upon English law than any other sovereign who has ruled over England, not even excepting Henry II or Henry VIII. He was thoroughly an Englishman, and shared fully the strong national feeling that now possessed the country. A magnificent specimen of manhood, he was a fine knight, a great hunter, a competent soldier. He was a masterful and sometimes a passionate man, with a very high sense of his royal power; he was often stern, sometimes cruel. He was loyal to his word, though he sometimes kept it in the letter rather than in the spirit. He was tenacious of his rights, but had the imagination to see the wisdom of taking the nation into partnership. He had a genius for order, and the mind of a lawyer. This was an age of great legislators, in all parts of Western Europe, but he was the greatest of them all. He fixed the character of the English legal system; he was the real founder of the English Parliament; and he nearly succeeded in organising a united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Organisation of Parliament.—At the outset of his reign he showed that he had learnt the lessons of the Barons' War. In the first year after his return, 1275, he summoned a full Parliament, including the bishops, abbots, and barons, two knights from every shire, and two burgesses from every borough. But he did not intend that Parliament should be more than a consultative body, except for

* There is a good short life of Edward I by T. F. Tout (Twelve English Statesmen).

grants of direct taxation. He designed it as a means of enabling the king to feel the pulse of the nation and to give it unity of purpose. Hence he did not feel himself bound always to summon it in the same form. Sometimes he called the barons alone ; sometimes the barons and the knights ; and on one occasion, in 1283, he called together two assemblages of knights, burgesses, and churchmen, without the barons—one for the north of England, the other for the south. He was experimenting ; and it was not until the great crisis which came in the later part of his reign (see p. 97) that he summoned, in 1295, the complete or " model " parliament which was to become the fixed pattern for future parliaments.

Functions of Parliament.—Nor did he contemplate giving to Parliament any supremacy of power. In the work of legislation, in which Edward was more active than any of his successors before the nineteenth century, Parliament played a very minor part. It was the king who made the great " Statutes "—a word which now first comes into use : he made them with the *advice* of his Council, and with the *consent* of Parliament, but the consent was commonly tacit. Some of the Statutes were issued without consultation with anybody but the Council which the king himself nominated ; others after consultation with the barons alone. Only in regard to direct taxation was the consent of Parliament held to be essential ; and even in regard to " tallages " (special taxes levied on the royal demesne) the king did not always think it necessary to get agreement beforehand. Agreement was useful, because it meant easier collection ; but it was not legally necessary, in the view of this lawyer-king, who never broke the letter of the law as he understood it. As for indirect taxation, or dues on trade, this had scarcely begun to be Parliament's concern. It is true that in 1275 Edward defined by Statute, in his orderly way, the scale of the old customary export duties on wool and leather—the " Great Customs," as they were called ; but he did not suppose that this put them under the control of Parliament, to give or withhold. And as for the " Petty Customs," or extra impositions and duties on foreign goods, these he held to be no concern of Parliament : he fixed them by private consultation with the merchants concerned. It cannot be said, therefore, that Parliament had yet become a ruling body. It was only a consultative body, and the business of ruling was still the king's. Edward was the last man in the world to submit to the dictation of committees of barons, like those of 1258. Nevertheless a mode of representing the whole

nation, more effective than existed, or ever had existed, in any country of the world, had been brought into being; and its power was bound to grow.

2. The Conquest of Wales (1276–1284)

The Power of the Llywelyns.—The chief interest of the first part of Edward I's reign, apart from his legislative work, lies in the subjugation of Wales.* In the twelfth century it had seemed that the warlike Marcher Lords would subjugate the mountain-principality without the aid of any national enterprise. But during the turmoils of the thirteenth century two great princes of Gwynedd—the unconquered region of North Wales, with Snowdon as its core—had led a great national revival. While John and Hubert de Burgh were fighting the rebellious barons, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (1194–1240) had forced all the Welsh chieftains to accept his supremacy, beaten back the Marcher Lords, and even compelled the English-speaking county of Pembroke, where Henry I had settled many English and Flemings, to do homage. During the Barons' War of Henry III's reign a second Llywelyn—Llywelyn ap Gruffydd (1246–1282)—had extended his power yet farther. He had made alliance with Simon de Montfort, whose chief foes (including Prince Edward) were Marcher Lords; and even when Montfort fell, Llywelyn had obtained, by the Treaty of Shrewsbury (1267), a large degree of independence, and the recognition of himself as Prince of Wales, a title which had never before been granted. Subject to homage and the payment of a small tribute, he ruled, in fact, independently over the greater part of Wales.

The Welsh War.—Edward, as Earl of Chester, was an old enemy of Llywelyn's, and when Edward came to the throne Llywelyn put off paying homage, and tried to revive the Montfort party. In 1276 Edward lost patience, and organised for the next year, 1277, a great combined attack, by land and sea, from the south, the centre, and the north. Llywelyn had to admit defeat, and lost all his territories save the principality of Gwynedd (Anglesey, Carnarvon, and Merioneth). During the next five years Edward set himself to introduce English methods of government in the ceded districts. But this aroused a revolt, first in the district known as the Four

* See School Atlas, Plate 34. There is a more detailed treatment of Wales in the larger Atlas, Plate 35*a*.

Cantreds (Denbighshire), which had been given to Llywelyn's treacherous brother David, and then over the greater part of Wales. Another great expedition was organised in 1282. Llywelyn was killed in an obscure skirmish in the south; David held out for another year, but was captured in 1283, and hanged, drawn, and quartered as a traitor; and the principality lay at Edward's feet.

Organisation of Wales.—He did not incorporate it in the kingdom of England—that did not happen till the time of the Welsh

FIG. 11.—Wales and the Marches.

king Henry VIII; but he brought it under the direct control of the crown, and defined its government by the Statute of Wales, 1284. A series of formidable castles—Harlech, Criccieth, Carnarvon, Conway—were built to hold down the Snowdon region, and round them little English towns grew up. The territories of Llywelyn were divided into shires on the English model, five in all. The rest of Wales was left to the feudal government of the Marcher Lords, among whom the Mortimers in the East became the most powerful, and as Earls of the March played an important part in English history. To a large extent Welsh usages were allowed to survive;

and in 1301 Edward conferred upon his eldest son (who had been born at Carnarvon in 1284) the title of Prince of Wales, which has ever since been borne by the eldest son of the king of England. Wales settled down as a subject State, though in 1295 there was a formidable rebellion. She preserved her distinct character and her separate language ; and lived her own life apart for centuries to come. One thing, however, she gave to her conqueror. Her long-bow archers were the most skilful in Christendom. They were often used in later wars—to begin with, against the Scots ; and it was from them that the English learnt the skill in archery which won them great victories in France.

Ireland.—It may be convenient here to say something about Ireland, which Edward never visited, but to which, as his records show, he paid a great deal of attention. During the century since Henry II the Norman barons in Ireland had steadily extended their power. They now held all the more fertile and lower-lying parts of the country ; and a great part of the country had been organised into shires on the English model. It was, in fact, under Edward I that the English in Ireland reached their highest point of power during the Middle Ages ; and if the country could have enjoyed the advantage of Edward's organising genius, it would have been saved from many future woes. But the calls upon his energy from other quarters were too great to make this possible.

3. The Legislative Work of Edward I

All through his reign Edward was active in legislation. But it was in the first half of the reign, between 1275 and 1290, that this activity was greatest ; and it will be convenient to survey his work as a whole.

(1) Police and Military.—In the Statute of Winchester (1285) Edward regulated and tightened up the whole police system of the country, defining the local duties of watch and ward, and of hue and cry after thieves, and bringing Henry II's Assize of Arms up to date by defining the arms to be worn by each class. He also ordained that knights should be elected in each shire as Conservators of the Peace—the ancestors of the modern Justices of the Peace. Edward further established the practice of requiring every landholder of £20 income to undertake the duty of knight service, whether he held his land on that condition or not ; and this obliterated the

essential feudal distinction between tenure by military service and other tenures.

(2) **Land Legislation.**—A series of important Statutes defined the land system, much on the lines which have continued until almost our own day. By the clauses *de donis conditionalibus* (Statute of Westminster II, 1285), the system of entailing estates on the eldest son was made easier. This was welcomed by the great feudatories, because it enabled them to keep their estates together. It had some evil results. But, as it encouraged the disinheritance of the younger sons, who drifted into other classes, it helped to prevent the creation of rigid social castes, the absence of which has been one of the healthiest features of English society. Even more important was the effect of the Statute *Quia Emptores* (Westminster III, 1290), which provided that when a tenant sold his land, the purchaser should hold it, not from the seller, but from the seller's lord. This contributed greatly to break up the feudal hierarchy, and in time enormously increased the number of small landlords who held direct from the king. Thus Edward's land laws tended to change the character of the feudal order.

(3) **The Judicial System.**—On another side also he strove, though not with so much success, to weaken the feudal order. By the Statute of Gloucester (1278) an inquiry was ordained into the grounds on which all feudal jurisdictions were claimed; the lords being required, in answer to *quo warranto* writs, to produce evidence of their rights to hold courts. The attempt produced such a storm of protest that Edward had to give way. Nevertheless, feudal jurisdiction underwent a steady process of curtailment, to the advantage of the royal courts. These courts were now much more clearly defined than earlier. Besides the travelling justices who went on circuit to the shire-courts, there were now three central courts, with their headquarters in Westminster Hall: the King's Bench, the Court of Exchequer, and the Court of Common Pleas. And they were now served by a highly organised corps of professional lawyers, whose development is one of the outstanding features of the time. They were soon to be all laymen, because churchmen were forbidden to practise in civil law in 1307. It was Edward I who started the Inns of Court, as training-grounds for the new profession; and when Edward II suppressed the Order of Knights Templar, their headquarters, the Temple, was devoted to this work.

(4) **The Church.**—If he did much to mitigate the feudal order,

Edward was not less ready to curtail the powers of the Church. In the Statute of Mortmain (1279) he forbade all further donations of land to the Church, except with the king's licence : nearly a quarter of the land of England was now held by the Church, and as the Church was a corporation which did not die, Church lands did not yield feudal profits, such as relief, wardship, and marriage dues. This nearly brought on a struggle between the king and the friar-archbishop Peckham. But the king held his own ; he also (1285) prevented poaching on the sphere of the king's court by the Church courts, by the issue of a writ *circumspecte agatis*. There never was a ruler more efficiently jealous for the powers of the national government than Edward I. He was equally strict in ensuring that his own officials acted justly : in 1289 he appointed a commission to inquire into the conduct of the judges, against whom there had been complaints ; and there were wholesale fines and dismissals.

(5) **Commercial Law.**—Lastly, Edward deserves the credit of being the founder of English commercial law ; and the later rapid growth of English trade owed not a little to the wisdom of his provisions. The growth of trade was greatly hampered by the jealousies of the little boroughs, and by the difficulty of making sure of the payment of debts quickly. By the Statute Merchant of 1283 Edward instituted a method of dealing with this difficulty which was both effective and acceptable ; while in the Carta Mercatoria (1303) he encouraged foreign traders to resort to England by providing that disputes between foreigners and Englishmen should be settled by mixed juries.

There has never been a period of more strenuous, efficient, and practical legislation than this reign. And its work stood the test of time. In many respects it is still the foundation of our legal system. There is, indeed, only one of Edward's enactments whose wisdom and justice can be seriously questioned. In 1290 he expelled all the Jews from the country ; they did not return for 360 years.

4. The Scottish Succession (1286–1295)

The last twenty years of Edward I were dominated by the affairs of Scotland.* Fate seemed to place in his hands the chance of

* See the Map in School Atlas, Plate 38*a*. There is a more detailed treatment for this period in the larger Atlas, Plate 35*b*.

bringing that country under the crown of England. Three times the prize seemed to be within his grasp. He was making a fourth attempt at it when death arrested him.

The Scottish Succession.—For a century, since William the Lion repurchased his independence from Richard I, Scotland had been at peace with England, and during this period she had made substantial progress in strength and unity. In particular, she had annexed the Western Isles from the Norsemen, after defeating a Norwegian force at *Largs* (1263). But Alexander III, the king who won this victory, was the last male of his house in the direct line. When he died in 1286, he left no heir save his daughter's child, a little girl two years old, living with her father in Norway. The Scottish barons declared Margaret the Maid of Norway queen, but rival claimants threatened civil war. Edward I saw in the succession of a girl-queen a chance of peacefully uniting the two kingdoms; and, with the assent of the Scottish barons, obtained a licence from the Pope for her marriage to his eldest son.

The Claimants.—But this admirable project was ruined when, in 1290, the Maid of Norway died on her way to Scotland; and civil war between the claimants to the throne began in earnest. There were eight principal claimants, but the two best titles belonged to John Balliol and Robert Bruce, two Norman barons with extensive lands in England and Scotland.* Both were descended from the younger brother of William the Lion, Balliol through his elder, and Bruce through his younger daughter. Edward was asked to arbitrate on the rival claims. He accepted the charge on condition that all the claimants and all the Scottish barons should do homage to him; and they submitted, though not without a protest from the *Communitas* of Scotland, whatever that may mean. The claims were elaborately investigated by a court which sat at Berwick; and the award went in favour of Balliol, who was crowned at Scone in 1292, after doing homage once more. Edward's suzerainty over Scotland seemed now to be secure. But he was determined to turn it into a reality. He welcomed appeals from the Scottish to the English courts. The anger of the Scots began to rise. It is unlikely, however, that their discontent would have taken an overt form, if circumstances had not arisen which seemed to favour the chances of a revolt: France and England were again at war.

* See the Genealogical Table D, at the end of the volume.

5. The National Crisis of 1295–1298

Quarrel with France.—Relations between the kings of England and France had long been strained. Philip the Fair of France was eager to obtain the remaining French possessions of the English crown in Guienne, to which had recently been added the county of Ponthieu in the north, which had come to Edward with his wife. An occasion presented itself in 1293, when a fleet of English ships from the Cinque Ports, pursuing an old feud with their French neighbours, attacked and defeated a number of Norman ships. Philip summoned Edward to appear before his court in Paris, to answer for his subjects' misbehaviour. Edward sent his brother in his place, who agreed to hand over the fortresses of Gascony as a pledge. Once master of the fortresses, Philip refused to give them up. The proud English king found that he had been tricked out of his duchy. He went to war with France, and strove to build up an alliance of European princes against the French king, including the Count of Flanders, whose subjects were the best customers for English wool. Philip, on his side, projected an invasion of England. More important, he stirred up a serious revolt in Wales, and, working on the grievances of the Scots, persuaded Balliol to make an alliance with France, to throw off his allegiance to Edward, and to invade the North of England.

The Model Parliament.—Thus a grave national crisis had suddenly arisen. This was the occasion upon which Edward summoned his famous Model Parliament of 1295. It included not only barons and bishops, knights and burgesses, but also representatives of the cathedral and parochial clergy : that is to say, it was a full representation of the three estates—barons, Church and commons.* In calling this Assembly, Edward threw himself upon the national spirit of the English ; and in the writs summoning the Parliament, made a very stirring appeal to English patriotism. "What touches all should be approved by all," he proclaimed, in a phrase which sums

* The representatives of the clergy continued to sit as one of the Estates of Parliament until late in the fourteenth century. Then, with the idea of being more independent, they insisted upon sitting separately, and making separate votes of money, in their own convocation. They consequently lost their place in Parliament. But a relic of their old position survives in the fact that even to-day, no clergyman of the Church of England can be elected to the House of Commons, because he is supposed to be represented in his own Estate.

up the argument for popular government ; and then, in the course of a denunciation of the French king, he asserted, as the climax of his appeal, that Philip "purposes to blot out the English language wholly from the earth." We are far indeed from the days of the Norman Conquest when the successor of the Conqueror fixes upon the defence of the English language as the chief ground of appeal to barons and bishops, knights, priests, and burgesses. The Parliament of 1295 rose to this appeal, and voted very substantial taxes.

Subjection of Scotland.—Before the Model Parliament met, Edward had already crushed the Welsh rising, though not without hard fighting (1295). He now marched into Scotland, routed the Scots at *Dunbar* (1296), took the main towns and castles, and received from the ignominious Balliol the surrender of his crown. He meant now to rule the northern kingdom directly, though he promised that the old laws of Scotland should be observed. But the French had still to be dealt with ; so, leaving John de Warenne as guardian of the Scottish realm, he departed for England, carrying with him the Holy Stone of Scone, the crowning-stone of the Scottish kings, which still rests at Westminster Abbey.

Conflict with Church and Barons.—His next task was the reconquest of Guienne, where his brother Edmund of Lancaster had meanwhile been holding his own with difficulty. Edward's plan was to attack from Flanders, while sending an English army to Guienne under the Earl Marshal, Bigod Earl of Norfolk. But for this big campaign more money was needed. Another Parliament was called. Barons, knights, and burgesses voted the sums required. But the clergy raised a difficulty. Pope Boniface VIII had just issued the Bull *clericis laicos*, wherein he forbade the clergy to pay any taxes from Church revenues ; and Archbishop Winchelsea firmly maintained the papal attitude. Edward struck hard. Like King John before him, he outlawed the clergy, and confiscated the revenues of Canterbury. If the clergy would not bear their share of national burdens, they should not have the benefits of national law. Then, on the heels of this quarrel with the Church, another and even worse difficulty presented itself. At a Parliament to which the barons alone were summoned, Bigod the Marshal and other barons refused to go to Guienne unless the king went with them, contending that they were not bound to serve abroad except under the king's leadership. After a stormy scene, Edward had to go off to Flanders leaving the barons behind him. To raise the money for his needs,

he had recourse in this difficult plight to desperate devices ; among other things, he seized the whole wool crop of the year, only releasing it on the payment of exceptional dues, far heavier than the " customs " defined in 1275.

The Confirmatio Cartarum.—In the king's absence, the barons and the bishops, making common cause, demanded that Magna Carta should be confirmed, with additional articles. Edward had done nothing in contravention of Magna Carta ; but it stood vaguely, in the eyes of the nation, as the bulwark of constitutional liberty. The additional articles, however, were important. They required that in future the king should pledge himself not to take any such taxes as he had recently levied, other than the ancient and accustomed aids, except " by the common consent of the realm " ; and that, in particular, he would never again levy the excessive dues on wool, beyond the ancient customs. This document, which is known as the *confirmatio cartarum*, was sent to the king at Ghent, and there signed by him. He hated having to sign it. Even after signing, he wriggled and made difficulties, so much so that he had to confirm it four times more before the end of his reign, and in 1301 had to accept still further articles which substantially modified his powers under forest-law. The Confirmation of 1297 was the first definite assertion of the control of Parliament over taxation ; for the vague clause in the original issue of Magna Carta had been omitted in 1216, and never included in later issues. Even so, the control thus secured was obviously far from complete. Nevertheless the victory of 1297, won not from a bad man like John or a weak man like Henry III, but from the strongest and ablest of English kings, marked a very real constitutional advance.

6. The Independence of Scotland (1297–1307)

The Revolt of Wallace.—While this vehement controversy was going on, it was not easy for the proud king to secure his position in France, or to maintain his hold over Scotland. During the critical year 1297 a fresh rebellion broke out in Scotland, led no longer by self-seeking and half-English barons, but by a simple knight of Strathclyde, William Wallace, which means William the Welshman.*

* On the Scottish War of Independence, Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* is worth reading.

He was joined by a crowd of rebels, angry at the way in which the English king's agents were conducting affairs. Warenne, the Guardian of the Realm, marched to crush this peasant rising ; but at *Stirling Bridge* he suffered an unexpected defeat, after which the revolt flamed out in every part of Scotland, encouraged by Edward's difficulties. Wallace even invaded England and devastated Northumberland. Scotland had to be conquered afresh. In 1298, therefore, Edward, back from his failure in Flanders, marched into Scotland with the feudal levy of England and—a new feature in English fighting—no less than 12,000 archers. Such odds could not be resisted ; and after a heroic fight Wallace was defeated at *Falkirk.*

Second Subjugation of Scotland.—It was obvious that a single victory was not enough to crush the resistance of the Scots, whose patriotism was now aflame. In 1299 Edward patched up a peace with France, in order that he might devote his main attention to the Scottish struggle. By 1304 the last embers of the Scottish revolt seemed to be crushed ; and in 1305 the gallant Wallace, caught in the hills, was betrayed to the English. With a ferocity which was unworthy of him, Edward had Wallace taken to London, condemned as a traitor, and executed with all the barbarity of hanging, drawing, and quartering : the four parts of his body were exposed in four Scottish towns.

Bruce's Rising.—It was easy to slaughter Wallace ; it was not so easy to put out the inextinguishable flame of patriotism which Wallace had kindled. The year after Wallace's death, Robert Bruce, grandson of the claimant, who had made his peace with Edward and had perhaps hoped for the throne, started a new conspiracy. After murdering his kinsman John Comyn (John Balliol's nephew), Bruce was crowned at Scone (1306). But his enterprise seemed doomed to failure. Ready as the Scots were to follow any leader, few would support a man with Bruce's record. His little army was scattered by the Earl of Pembroke ; his relatives were executed ; his lands were confiscated ; and he had to take refuge as a hunted fugitive in the Highlands. Edward's anger at this revolt, however, led him to inflict such severities upon the Scots that the party of independence raised its head again. In the spring of 1307 Bruce came out from his hiding, and appeared in his own lands in Carrick (Ayrshire). A considerable force joined him. Full of fury, Edward, now seventy years old, led an army north to crush the rebel. He reached Carlisle. There, indomitable still, he mounted

his horse for the last time, and rode as far as Burgh-on-Sands. Here death struck him down ; but with his last strength the fierce old man made his son swear to go on with the expedition. The son was of a different mettle, and returned tamely south. In his absence, revolt ran across Scotland like fire in the heather ; it was soon burning too fiercely to be extinguished.

Thus ended a great reign, in failure. Edward chose as the inscription on his tombstone the grim words *Malleus Scotorum*, the Hammer of the Scots. But it is not in that character that he deserves to be remembered to-day wherever the English language is spoken, or representative government exists : not as the enemy of national freedom, but rather as the founder of parliamentary institutions and the maker of those laws which secure and shelter liberty.

7. Edward II and the Barons (1307–1314)

Edward II and the Lords Ordainers.—Edward I, son of a contemptible father, was succeeded by a still more contemptible son. Edward II was a handsome young man of twenty-three, but he was incurably listless and idle, and wholly under the influence of a clever, showy young knight of Gascony, Piers Gaveston. He was the first king since the Conquest who simply refused, through sheer slackness, to pay any attention to public business. This gave an opportunity to the barons, who had resented the masterful government of Edward I, and had shown themselves unruly in his last years. The neglect of the Scottish war, and the insolence of Gaveston, gave them an excellent excuse. In 1308 Edward was bullied into exiling Gaveston ; but in 1309 the favourite was back again. Thereupon the leading barons, headed by the king's cousin, Thomas of Lancaster, the wealthiest man in England and the owner of three, and later of five, earldoms, decided to take the government into their own hands. In a purely baronial "parliament" of 1310, from which knights and burgesses were excluded, they imposed upon the king a scheme of government modelled on the Provisions of Oxford : a committee of twenty-one Lords Ordainers were to direct the government, and draw up a scheme of reform. For a few months the Lords Ordainers, led by Lancaster and the grim and cruel Earl of Warwick, controlled affairs ; while Edward and Gaveston went off upon a futile expedition to Scotland.

Rule of the Lords Ordainers.—On their return, the Lords

Ordainers forced Edward to banish Gaveston once more, and to accept a long list of reforming ordinances. But in 1311 Gaveston was back again. Besieged in Scarborough, he surrendered on the promise of a fair trial, but was brutally murdered by Warwick (1312), in the presence of Lancaster. This outrage shocked even the listless Edward into a show of energy, and he swore vengeance against the murderers of his friend. But he was impotent; Lancaster and the Lords Ordainers were still masters of England.

8. Bannockburn and its Consequences

Bruce Master of Scotland.—While these squabbles were going on, Bruce—who might easily have been mastered in 1307—had been rapidly securing his control over Scotland. Backed by the now fervid patriotism of the Scots, and by a group of daring captains, he had taken castle after castle.* In 1314 he was besieging Stirling, the fortress that controls the passage over the Forth from the Lowlands to the Highlands. It was one of the last Scottish castles in English hands; and its garrison had been forced to the point of agreeing to surrender if it had not been relieved by an English army before June 24th.

The Battle of Bannockburn.—In face of this peril, it was obvious that an English army must march for the north, and the feudal array was called forth. Thomas of Lancaster showed the stuff of which he was made by refusing to join in this national venture; and this destroyed the undeserved reputation for patriotism which he had laboured to create. But, in spite of Lancaster, it was a very splendid array that set forth to crush the obstinate Scots. It came in sight of Stirling on the last day of grace, June 23rd; and found that the Scots, who could not put a force of mailed knights into the field capable of meeting the English knighthood, were putting their trust in solid squares of footmen armed with spears, who were drawn up at *Bannockburn*, just south of the beleaguered castle. Bruce proved himself an admirable tactician. The English army was badly handled. The archers were not properly employed. The knights got bogged in the soft ground, fell into confusion, and hammered in vain at the Scottish squares. The battle ended in panic and rout, Edward leading a headlong flight. Stirling Castle opened its gates

* On all this, Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather* is good reading.

to the victor; and Scottish independence was won. The triumph of Bannockburn, following on the miseries of the previous twenty years, forged the Scots into a nation.

Edward Bruce in Ireland.—Bruce was not content with independence. In the following year he sent his brother Edward to Ireland, where the Celtic chieftains joined him. A brutal war swept the country from end to end; the towns and castles of the English settlers were burnt; and although Edward Bruce was

FIG. 12.—The Scottish Borders.

defeated and killed in 1318, his adventure had wrecked the possibility of a united Ireland under the English crown. From this time English power in Ireland was practically limited to the Pale, a narrow territory round Dublin.* Thus rapidly had the Island Empire which was so nearly completed by Edward I collapsed under his feeble successor.

Even England herself was not safe. Bruce ravaged the north with terrible ferocity; and Thomas of Lancaster had to submit to

* School Atlas, Plate 38*b*

the humiliation of asking for a truce. Bannockburn, indeed, was not the end of strife between the sister realms ; it was rather the beginning of a three hundred years' war, which raged incessantly upon the borders, keeping them in a state almost of savagery, and occasionally flamed out into a national war. Behind this screen of border raiding and fighting, the Scots—poor, proud, turbulent, and quarrelsome —carried on their separate national life.

9. The Continuance of Strife in England (1314–1330)

Fall of Thomas of Lancaster.—Thomas of Lancaster had been so deeply discredited by the issue of the Scottish war that his influence quickly evaporated ; and although some of the more moderate barons retained a good deal of power, it became possible to build up a king's party. In this the principal part was played by two western barons, the Despensers, father and son. They were men of considerable capacity, and they won the king's favour by helping him to take vengeance for his lost friend Gaveston. At the battle of *Boroughbridge*, 1322, Lancaster and other barons of his party were defeated. Lancaster was killed ; others were imprisoned. One of them, Roger Mortimer, the greatest of the Marcher Lords, escaped from the Tower in 1324, and took refuge in France. For a few years Edward and the Despensers were the masters of England.

The Parliament of York.—This victory led to one important constitutional result. At a full Parliament summoned at York (1322) the Ordinances of the Lords Ordainers were declared to have been illegal, on the ground that they had been passed by the barons alone, and not in a full Parliament ; and it was laid down that in future all such provisions should be valid only if made by a full Parliament, including the "commonalty of the realm." This was a valuable recognition of Parliamentary authority, even though it was the result of a faction fight. It marks the close of the period during which the barons had been striving for the establishment of a close oligarchy. For more than a century after the Conquest, they had fought for feudal independence ; then, for another century (1214–1322), they had striven to establish oligarchical control over the national government. Henceforward their struggle for power was to be carried on in and through Parliament.

Fall of Edward II.—The restored power of the king was not to last long. In 1325 his queen, Isabella, who had been badly used,

was sent to Paris to do business with her brother, Charles IV of France ; and a little later, her young son went over to do homage for Gascony. In Paris Isabella met, and fell in love with, the exiled Marcher Lord, Mortimer. They formed a plan to overthrow the Despensers ; landed in England in 1326, taking the young prince with them ; and, being joined by many of the barons, easily overthrew the king's power. A Parliament, summoned for the purpose, forced Edward II to resign the crown to his son. The wretched king was first imprisoned, and then, in 1327, foully murdered at Berkeley castle, while his queen and her paramour wielded power in the name of the fourteen-year-old Edward III.

Isabella and Mortimer.—Their government lasted for three years, disturbed by frequent revolts, and by a new Scottish invasion. By the *Treaty of Northampton*, 1328, they formally recognised the independence of Scotland : a very necessary agreement, but one which seemed humiliating to the English. They also made peace with France (1327), which had seized Gascony during the troubles, and now consented to restore only Bordeaux and Bayonne, and a strip of coast between them. This, too, was a humiliation : it was impossible not to draw a contrast between this impotent government and the proud strength of Edward I. Misgovernment at home added to the discredit of the self-appointed regents. Their chief concern seemed to be to add to Mortimer's power. He took the title of Earl of March, which was later inherited by Edward IV. But the whole nation was relieved when in 1330 his government came to an end. In that year the young king, now eighteen years old, declared himself of age, put Mortimer under arrest and later had him executed, and placed the queen-mother in honourable confinement. A new reign, which was to be of great significance in British history, opened in 1330.

CHAPTER IX

NATIONALISM TRIUMPHANT (1330–1360)

1. Economic and Social Changes

Edward III.—The importance of the reign of Edward III, unlike those of Henry II and Edward I, did not arise from the character and work of the king. Edward III was another Richard I.

His chief interest lay in military adventures, and he fully shared the spurious chivalry of his age, which glorified knightly deeds but cared not at all about the sufferings of common folk. The constitutional progress of his reign was not in any degree due to his statesmanship, but to the fact that his incessant demands for money for his military needs gave Parliament the chance of exacting fresh privileges. Even the interest in the development of oversea trade, with which he may perhaps be credited, and which is certainly a marked feature of his reign, was probably due mainly to his desire for increased trade dues. In the first part of his reign, which is covered by this chapter, he was a popular hero, because his dazzling successes in war not only raised the prestige of England to a very high pitch and intensified national fervour, but also seemed, at first, to have brought great prosperity. Even then he showed himself an untrustworthy man ; and in his later years his lethargy and self-indulgence, and the sordid rivalries of his family, destroyed all his popularity.

Prosperity of England.—In the first half of the fourteenth century, England was growingly prosperous. The social progress of the country, under an efficient and well-administered system of law, had not been affected by the constitutional strife of kings and barons—not even when it led to brief outbreaks of civil war, as in 1214–1217, 1264–1266, and 1322 ; because these were so short that they did not lead to any breakdown of the system of government. Certain very significant social changes were insensibly taking place, which must be grasped if we are to understand the development of the period.

Changed Character of the Baronage.—In the first place, the number of the great barons was steadily diminishing, while their individual wealth and power was growing, partly because their estates were seldom divided among their sons, partly because they were being aggregated by marriages. There were only about a dozen earls, and less than a hundred barons all told ; and the distinction between these magnates and the lesser feudal tenants of the crown (formerly known as the " lesser barons ") was now definite. Moreover, the barons had forgotten their old desire for local independence. Their interest was now in national government. They were becoming a court nobility, and in the reign of Edward III they began to have town houses in or near Westminster, which had now become definitely the centre of government, because the law-courts, the lawyers and the Treasury were fixed there.

Rise of the Country Gentlemen.—In the second place, the class of knights or country gentlemen was becoming much more numerous, and much more important. The distinction between those who were immediate tenants of the king and those who were vassals of other lords was disappearing, partly owing to the working of the statute *Quia Emptores;* moreover, the whole class of substantial freeholders had been merged with the knights by the imposition upon them of the obligation of knight-service. The knights were becoming more prosperous, as more and more land was rescued from the waste and brought under cultivation. The growth of the wool trade was very profitable to them. They were working the system of local government through the shire-courts, as it had developed since Henry II. Since Edward I they had supplied the important officers known as "Conservators of the Peace"; and in 1360 the powers of these officers were developed, and they became "*Justices of the Peace*"—a class of local administrators of justice and maintainers of order who were to be all-important in local government down to the nineteenth century. The growth of the numbers, wealth, and political activity of the knights or country gentlemen was an extremely important political factor, and was one of the main causes of the development of the House of Commons.

Decline of Serfdom.—In the third place, economic changes were gradually bringing about an improvement in the condition of the mass of cultivators. The amount of labour-service due from them had been fixed by custom. In many cases, their lords, being anxious to have a ready-money income, were "commuting" their services for fixed payments. When this happened, the "villein" became practically a free man, because the fixed payment was in substance a rent for his holding, and so long as the rent was paid, there was little reason why the villein or his sons should remain bound to the soil: it was now easier for them to get work as free labourers for a wage. In other words, a money-economy, which is elastic, was taking the place of a rigid "service-economy." This change was taking place rapidly when the Black Death came to interrupt it and (in some ways) to quicken it. The English people were slowly becoming socially free. Serfdom was practically to disappear from England before the end of the fifteenth century.

Growth of Towns and Trade.—In the fourth place—and this is perhaps the most important of all—the towns and their trade were growing rapidly, and thus an element in the population which

was distinct from the feudal hierarchy was rising into importance. The towns, though still, with the exception of London, very small places, were no longer merely local centres for marketing ; they were becoming centres of manufacturing activity, especially in weaving, but also in many other crafts. In scores of little towns " misteries " (from the French *mestiers*, crafts) were being organised on a self-governing basis, under the general control of the town-authorities. These local groups are often called " craft-gilds," but the word " misteries " was more commonly employed at the time. The " misteries " regulated the character, quality, and measurements of the commodities their members might produce ; they also regulated the admission and training of apprentices, who, after serving their time, worked as " journeymen " for wages until they were admitted to the " mistery " as master-craftsmen. This system had been gradually growing up during the thirteenth century, but it became general in the first half of the fourteenth. The " misteries " claimed the right—sometimes under a royal charter, but more often by agreement with the town-authorities—to exclude all but their own members from practising their crafts in their own towns.

The Woollen Trade.—One of the features of this period was a rapid increase in the manufacture of English cloth from English wool, not only for the home market but for export : hitherto the bulk of the English wool crop had been exported to the Flemish towns. The change was hastened by the encouragement which Edward III's government gave to Flemish weavers to settle in England. The reason why the Flemings were willing to come was that they were being exposed, from 1328 onwards, to severe control by the Count of Flanders and his suzerain the king of France. In 1332 the old restrictions on the immigration of aliens were removed, and in 1337 the king's protection was, by Statute, offered to them : this Statute even tried to forbid the importation of foreign woollen cloths, and the export of raw wool ; and though this prohibition did not stand, and was indeed only a move in the game of foreign policy, it was a sign of the growing activity of the English cloth trade. The English weaving " misteries " did not, of course, welcome the coming of the aliens, and tried to use their exclusive rights against them. But the Flemish immigration of these years was an event of great importance in the economic history of England.

Influence of Economic Change upon Politics.—This growth of towns and trade and manufacture is of vital importance.

It explains, in the first place, the part which the burgesses were able to play in the growth of the House of Commons : the king derived a large part of his revenue from them. It brings out, in the second place, the fact that the French war, which was the great national adventure of Edward III's reign, was not exclusively, or even mainly, an adventure of conquest, but was closely bound up with the economic policy which England was beginning to pursue. It was in the reign of Edward III that the development of national trade became a principal object of national policy, both in the eyes of the king's government, and in the eyes of Parliament, which was very active in petitioning for trade laws, and welcomed the French war largely because of its anticipated effects on trade. The knights wanted to sell their wool at good prices ; the burgesses wanted to develop their manufactures and their exports. It was a prospering and self-confident nation which set forth upon the adventures of the fourteenth century. It was also a nation whose common people were armed. Under the laws of Henry II and Edward I the common people of England, unlike those of other countries, were in some degree trained to arms ; and since the value of the long-bow had been learnt in the Welsh wars, archery was being practised everywhere.

2. The Scottish War (1332–1342)

Confusion in Scotland.—Edward III's first military adventure was in Scotland. In 1329 Robert I (Bruce) died, leaving as his heir a child of five, David II. Amid the confusion of a minority in a country just recovering from a desolating war, the nobles of Balliol's party, who had been driven out, saw a chance of re-establishing themselves. Edward III did not care so soon to break the treaty of 1328, but he encouraged Edward Balliol to invade Scotland with a small force of the " Disinherited." At *Dupplin Moor*, 1332, the Scottish feudal levy was defeated, mainly by the use of archers ; and Edward Balliol was crowned at Scone. To win Edward III's support, Balliol undertook to do him homage. But within four months Balliol was driven out of Scotland, at the battle of *Annan*.

A New Attempt at Conquest.—Then Edward resolved to support his vassal—a very superfluous violation of the treaty. At the battle of *Halidon Hill*, 1333, he defeated the Scots. The importance of this battle was that in it the tactics later so successful in France were employed—the English fought on foot (as Bannockburn

had taught them to do), and they trusted mainly to their archers : the feudal levy had fallen into the background. Edward Balliol was restored, and the boy-king David was sent by his supporters to France. Balliol was forced not only to do homage but to cede to England the seven southern shires of Scotland, including Edinburgh. To such a cession the Scots could never submit. A dreary war followed, which went on until, and after, the beginning of the French war. It was not until 1341 that the English were finally expelled, and the boy-king returned to Scotland—only to find that in his absence the Scottish baronage had got out of hand, and the best parts of the country were devastated.

The wanton strife into which Scotland had thus been plunged, just when she most needed peace, gave a set-back to her development of the most serious kind. It was hard to forgive. The alliance with France against England had been sealed ; and henceforth there was continuous war upon the borders, which sentenced northern England also to backwardness.

3. The French War (1337–1360)

Causes of the War with France.—Many causes drew Edward III into the war with France, which was the main feature of his reign. In part the aid given by France to the Scots was to blame. Still more important was the situation in Flanders, where the great towns—the best customers for English wool—were in revolt against the French king, whose policy was ruining them. In 1336 Philip VI ordered the arrest of all Englishmen in Flanders ; in 1337 Edward III responded by the prohibition of imports and exports which we have already mentioned, and the war began. The Flemish towns, threatened with ruin, appealed for Edward's aid, and the trade interests of England seemed to demand a favourable reply. This was the main cause of the war, and this was why Edward started his campaigns in Flanders. But there were also other motives. Guienne was threatened by the French, and the wine trade with Guienne was important. Exiled claimants to French feudal states took refuge in England, and urged the king to help them. The spurious chivalry of the age bade Edward seek for glory in a campaign of conquest. Finally, a claim to the French crown could be put forward, through Edward's mother.* But this was only an after-

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

thought. Edward had already recognised Philip VI as king of France by doing homage to him ; and the claim to the French throne was not put forward until 1340, when the war had already been raging for three years. The chief reason for putting it forward was to make things easier for the Flemings, by removing the reproach that they were fighting against their king.

The Hundred Years' War.—The war thus begun is commonly called the Hundred Years' War. This is a misnomer :

FIG. 13.—Treaty of Bretigny.

war was not continuous during the next hundred years, but intermittent ; on the other hand, war with France had been intermittent ever since the accession of Henry II. The only difference is that the war now undertaken was no longer merely a feudal dispute, but a national enterprise, supported by national sentiment. There is no doubt that the war was popular, until things began to go wrong in the later part of the reign.

Sluys, Cressy and Calais.*—From 1337 to 1340 the scene

* For this war see School Atlas, Plate 33*a*. Conan Doyle's *Sir Nigel* is a good tale of this war. The *Chronicle of Froissart* is also excellent reading. It can be got in Everyman's Library.

of fighting was in Flanders ; but it was without result until in 1340 a great naval battle was won at *Sluys*, where the French fleet was entirely destroyed. This battle was important, because it gave to England the command of the English Channel : henceforth England always claimed to be mistress of these northern seas, though she was not able always to enforce her claim. A truce followed ; but fighting was soon resumed in Brittany, over a disputed succession to the duchy, and also in Guienne. In 1346, however, Edward led a small army of English men-at-arms and archers from Barfleur in Normandy almost to the gates of Paris, and then northwards towards the Straits of Dover. Overtaken on the Somme by an overwhelming French force, he won the dazzling victory of *Cressy*, which may be said to mark the downfall of the feudal method of fighting, and the establishment of English military superiority : it was also the first battle in which cannon were used ; and although they were too ineffective to count, the first appearance of gunpowder foreshadowed the collapse of the purely feudal era in military affairs. Edward finished his campaign by laying siege to *Calais*, which surrendered in the next year, 1347. The English were to hold this foothold on French soil for two hundred years. They used it as the "staple" town, where English vendors of wool and woollens met their foreign customers.

A Year of Victories.—The year of Cressy was also marked by other brilliant victories. David of Scotland, invading the north to help his French ally, was defeated and taken captive at the battle of *Neville's Cross*, while Henry of Lancaster won decisive victories in Guienne ; and in the next year, 1347, besides the fall of Calais, the English armies won a decisive victory in Brittany, and put the English claimant on the ducal throne. Never had there been such years of victories. The prestige of England rose throughout Europe to the highest pitch.

Second Phase of the War.—But the years of victory were followed, both in France and in England, by the first of three terrible visitations of the dread plague known as the Black Death. We shall have to examine its momentous social results in the next chapter. In the meanwhile, it led to a slackening of the war. It was not until 1355 that campaigning again became vigorous. Edward had sent his eldest son, the Black Prince, who had won his spurs at Cressy, to govern Guienne. In 1355 the Black Prince carried a desolating raid right across southern France, from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean. In the next year, 1356, he led a similar raid into

the heart of central France. He was intercepted by an immense French army, who outnumbered him by ten to one; but, thanks once more to the English infantry tactics and the archers, he won a yet more dazzling victory than Cressy, at *Poitiers* (1356), taking the French king, John, prisoner. Thus two captive kings, John of France and David of Scotland, shared the hospitality of the Tower of London. In his captivity John was persuaded to cede nearly all the territories that Henry II had once occupied. But the French, though in a desperate condition, would not accept these terms. Edward, therefore, himself led an army into northern France, where he pillaged and devastated at his will without resistance, and even laid siege to Paris. The French had to give way; and in the Treaty of *Bretigny* (1360) they ceded to the English king, in full sovereignty, Calais, Ponthieu, and the whole of Aquitaine, on condition of his abandoning his claim to the French crown. This was the culmination of an intoxicating period of national triumph. It was the apogee of the reign. It was the most heady draught of military glory that the English had ever tasted; and it was also (or seemed to be) good for trade.

4. The Development of Parliament

The Control of Taxation.—During this period of military adventure, the development of Parliament went on apace, precisely because heavy taxation was needed for the cost of the war. In times of peace, the king was expected to "live of his own," from the proceeds of crown estates, the profits of justice, the customary feudal dues, and the yield of the traditional customs revenue. But in time of war these sources of revenue had to be supplemented by grants of direct taxation. Since the time of Edward I these taxes had assumed the form of a sort of crude income-tax—one-tenth of the income of town-dwellers, and one-fifteenth of that of rural landholders. Owing to the difficulty of making constant new assessments, however, the "tenth-and-fifteenth" came to be fixed, during this period, at a lump sum of £39,000, each town or shire paying the same regular quota; so we find Parliament granting two or three tenths-and-fifteenths. Sometimes, also, they granted subsidies on wool, additional to the customary dues. But there was a good deal of dispute on this; the king had a way of going behind Parliament and dealing with the merchants direct; and it was not until 1362 that it was finally

decided that all such grants must be made by Parliament. Again, the king still claimed the right of levying "tallages" on his demesne lands, which included most of the towns: in 1340 control over these taxes was definitely assumed by Parliament. The king wriggled, and played fast and loose with his agreements; but the main points of parliamentary control over taxation were established during this period.

Influence on Legislation.—Because grants were incessantly needed, Parliament met practically every year. It had to be kept in touch with what was going on, in order to ensure its grants. It insisted upon having an audit of the way in which its grants were spent. It began to appropriate taxes to particular purposes, and to make conditions before making grants. It became, also, very active in putting forward petitions for legislation; statutes were still made by the king and his Council, but they were now made mostly on the basis of petitions, and edicts not based upon parliamentary discussion came to be known as ordinances. Parliament was not yet taking a direct part in the framing of laws, but this was the obvious conclusion of the way in which it was developing.

The House of Commons.—Perhaps the most important change of this period came right at the beginning. In 1332 the knights and the burgesses began to sit separately from the barons, and from the representatives of the Church, and to be known as the House of Commons or communities. This was an extraordinarily fortunate arrangement. The system of "estates" had been growing up in the other countries of Western Europe, equally with England. But in other countries the boroughs formed an estate by themselves, while the lesser barons (corresponding to the English knights) either joined with the greater nobles, as in France, or became a separate estate by themselves, as in Aragon. Only in England did the Third Estate consist of a body which might be said to represent the whole community, town and country alike. Only in England, therefore, did the Lower House become a genuinely national body. Thus, on all sides, the strength of national feeling and of national organisation was in this period the outstanding characteristic of England.

Scotland and Ireland.—Parliaments had meanwhile been established by the crown both in Scotland (1326) and in Ireland (1295). But in both countries they were very weak. The Scottish Parliament contained no powerful body corresponding with the English knights, and it early fell into the habit of delegating most of

its powers to a committee of barons, known as the Lords of the Articles. For that reason the Scottish Parliament was never an effective body. The Irish Parliament could speak only for the English colony in the Pale, and therefore counted for little. It was only in England that a really effective national organisation had been wrought out.

CHAPTER X

AN ERA OF REVOLUTION (1360–1399)

1. The Factors of Revolution

Social Unrest.—The brilliance and triumph of the first part of Edward III's long reign was followed by a dismal period of failure, faction, discontent, and national disunity, which led to a premature political revolution; and the troubles of this time in many ways foreshadowed the yet worse troubles of the following century. In these troubles there were many elements. There was a great social upheaval, resulting from the Black Death; there was failure in the French war, and consequent disillusionment at home; there was a growing revolt against the Church; and there was an ominous rise of strong factions of court nobles, closely connected with the royal house, which used Parliament as the arena of their feuds. All these causes of unrest acted and reacted upon each other; but we shall get a clearer idea of this difficult era if we take them in turn.

Effects of the Black Death.—The plague known as the Black Death swept across all Europe from the East in the middle of the fourteenth century. There were three visitations of it in England, the first (and worst) in 1348–1349, soon after Cressy; the second in 1362, after the Treaty of Bretigny; and the third in 1369, when the second phase of the French war began. Contemporaries asserted that half the population lost their lives during the first visitation; and, judging by such material as is available, this is not far from the truth, at any rate for the three visitations taken together. The social and economic results of a sudden reduction of the population by about one-half were, of course, immense and far-reaching. Work could not be carried on. Land went out of cultivation. The reduced number of workers, in town and country, but especially in

the country, could command unheard-of wages if they were free to hire out their labour; while those whose services had not been "commuted" were indignant at having to work on the old terms, and many of them deserted their holdings. Thus the first result was to improve the condition of the labouring class.

Economic Strife.—But the landlords, unable to get their land tilled except at what seemed to them exorbitant wages, began to regret having "commuted" the services of their villeins, and instead of relieving the grievances of the villeins who remained, tried to force the emancipated workers back under the old conditions. The landlords controlled both Houses of Parliament, and as Justices of the Peace it was their business to enforce the law. They used their power without scruple. From 1351 onwards they passed a series of *Statutes of Labourers*, designed to force back their escaped workers under the old system, and to limit the rate of wages that might legally be paid to free labourers. The result was a sort of underground civil war, all over the country, between the masters and the workers; and the workers felt that the whole power of the State was arrayed against them. In actual fact, the landlords were not able fully to enforce their own policy: they broke their own laws, and paid wages above the legal maximum, rather than let their land go out of cultivation. In the long run, it is probable that the labouring class gained more than they lost: serfdom had practically disappeared from England before the end of the next century, because the landlords, even with Parliament behind them, could not fight against economic forces. But in the meanwhile there was infinite bitterness in every part of the country, and a cleavage of a dangerous kind between the ruling class and the working class. Out of such conditions revolutionary upheavals spring; and the revolution of 1381 was mainly a result of this trouble, which had been fermenting for more than twenty years. Langland's *Piers Plowman*, one of the earliest of the great English poems, which belongs to the end of this century, expresses something of the bitterness of the peasant, who began to think that the whole of the great world was arrayed against him.

Discontent in Towns.—In the towns, also, there was discontent, though not so bitter: "journeymen," who worked for a daily wage, were resenting the exclusiveness of the masters who controlled the "misteries"; both journeymen and masters were angry at the favour that was shown to alien Flemings and others, who were really building up the cloth industry, but who seemed to

be taking the bread out of their mouths. There was resentment also against the Lombards and other foreign money lenders, who had taken up the business of banking in London after the Jews were expelled.

Revolt against the Church.—Alongside of these social discontents went a growing revolt against the wealth and power of the Church. Between 1305 and 1378 the Popes abandoned Rome, and lived on French soil at Avignon; mostly Frenchmen, the Popes of this period were practically the creatures of the French king. This in itself outraged English national sentiment, and led to a series of measures against the Papacy which were urged upon the king by Parliament—notably the first of a series of Statutes of *Provisors* (1351), aimed at the papal practice of appointing foreign clerics to English benefices, and the first of a series of Statutes of *Præmunire* (1353), which forbade appeals from England to "foreign" (*i.e.* papal) tribunals. It was this feeling which led Parliament, in 1366, to repudiate the payment of the tribute to the Pope which had been paid ever since John became a vassal of Rome. More serious was a growing anger against the great English churchmen, who were no longer, in this period, saintly and patriotic men like Anselm and St. Hugh of Lincoln, Grosseteste and Kilwardby, but were mostly scions of great baronial families, as wealthy and as worldly as their fathers and brothers. The popular literature of the period is full of satire against the lords of the Church, against fat abbots and greedy monks, against the grasping friars, who had fallen from the noble poverty of their early days. Something of these discontents finds expression in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, in spite of their gaiety. England seemed to be moving towards an upheaval which might have anticipated the Reformation. And a leader for such a movement arose in John Wycliffe, an Oxford scholar who was Master of Balliol in 1360; he was a famous preacher, and in the last ten years of Edward III his denunciations of the wealth and corruption of the clergy, and of their interference in politics, were beginning to ring through England. In the next reign he was to challenge some of the doctrines of the Roman Church, and to go near to denying the supremacy of the Pope.

The Court Nobility.—On the political side, unrest was caused by the factious disputes of rival members of the royal house. Edward III, father of six sons, of whom five reached manhood, had provided for them by marrying them to the heiresses of great estates. John of Gaunt, the fourth son, married the heiress of the House of

Lancaster, and became the richest English subject.* He held five earldoms; in his honour the county of Lancaster was turned into a County Palatine, with its own chancery; and his estates were scattered over every part of England. Lionel of Clarence, the third son, married the heiress of the de Burghs in Ireland, and his daughter carried her estates and claims to the great house of Mortimer, Earls of March on the Welsh border. Thomas of Gloucester, the youngest son, married one of the heiresses of the Bohuns of Hereford. Many of the greatest English baronies, and connections with many of the rest, had thus fallen to members of the royal house. They formed a new kind of baronage, a court baronage, who fought for control over the power of the crown; and the Wars of the Roses in the next century were the outcome of their strife. And they found, in this period, a new means of winning power, by getting control over the elections to Parliament, and "packing" the House of Commons with their supporters. The unseemly spectacle of their rivalries and their greed did a great deal to undermine confidence in government during the last part of Edward III's reign, and the reign of his successor.

It added to all these discontents that the military glory of the first part of the reign evaporated, and that from 1360 onwards the glories of earlier years were replaced by a long series of failures and humiliations.

2. The Later Years of Edward III (1360–1377)

A Restless Peace.—The peace of Bretigny lasted only nine years. During that period the discontents we have already described were simmering in England; the French conquests were being governed by the Black Prince, who maintained at Bordeaux the most splendid court in Europe; the rest of France was in a condition of indescribable misery, for the peasantry had but recently broken into an open revolt, which had been drowned in blood, and the country was being ravaged by "Free Companies" of disbanded soldiers, mainly English, whom nobody could control.† Even during this interval of peace, the Black Prince could not resist his passion for

* The chief holdings of the Duchy of Lancaster are shown in the School Atlas, I late 34. See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

† Conan Doyle's story, *The White Company*, gives a good idea of all this.

fighting : he led an army into Spain, to uphold the bloodthirsty tyrant Pedro of Navarre, and there won a brilliant, useless victory at Najera or Navarette (1367), in which French troops fought on the other side. This campaign had important results. It ruined the Prince's health, and caused his premature death in 1376 ; and the heavy taxation imposed upon the French dominions to meet its cost caused a revolt, which was supported by the French king, and led to a renewal of war in 1369, when Edward III revived his claim to the French crown, which he had abandoned in 1360.

Renewal of War.—The renewed war cost as much as the splendid campaigns of the earlier years, and involved as heavy taxation, which had to be borne by a people crippled by the Black Death. But it brought no victories. Taught by Cressy and Poitiers, the French leaders systematically avoided pitched battles, and trusted rather to the awakened patriotism of the French people. It was impossible to hold down the conquered lands. The English tried the deterrent of ferocity : in 1370 the Black Prince slaughtered the whole population of the rebel city of Limoges, except a few knights whom " chivalry " bade him preserve for the sake of their ransoms ; but ferocity only deepened the hatred of the French for the English. In 1373 John of Gaunt marched through France, unresisted, from Calais to Bordeaux, slaughtering and pillaging : the only result was to steel the resolve of the French, while the English army was decimated by hunger and cold. There was neither glory nor profit to be won from this sort of war. Before Edward III died, in 1377, the English held nothing of their conquests save the five fortified towns of Calais, Cherbourg, Brest, Bordeaux, and Bayonne—all on the coast.

Factions in England.—Meanwhile, in England, a conflict of political factions was going on. After the death, in 1369, of his Queen Philippa, who had been his good genius, Edward III became listless and indifferent, and fell under the influence of his mistress, Alice Perrers. The dominant power in the government was his son, John of Gaunt, especially when he succeeded, in 1371, in getting rid of the chancellor, William of Wykeham, and other clerical officers. Because of his rivalry with these churchmen, John of Gaunt gave his backing to the anti-clerical party, and supported Wycliffe, without knowing or caring anything about his teaching. Under his control, corruption and misgovernment were rampant, and the court faction became intensely unpopular, especially

among the citizens of London, between whom and John of Gaunt there was a standing feud.

The Good Parliament.—In 1373 the Black Prince returned from Guienne, a dying man. He lent the weight of his influence to the opposition; and with this encouragement Parliament ventured, in 1376, to attack the government. Led by its Speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare, the "Good Parliament," as it came to be called, not only sent up a shoal of petitions for reform, but invented a new method of action which was to afford a very potent weapon to future Parliaments. The worst offenders were charged before the House of Lords, as the supreme law-court, with wholesale malversation of public funds; and the House of Lords condemned Lord Latimer, the Chamberlain, and Lyons, a London merchant, to imprisonment and fines. This was the invention of the process known as "impeachment."

The "Packing" of Parliament.—But the work of the Good Parliament had no lasting effect. The Prince of Wales died during its sittings, and John of Gaunt regained all his power. He declared the proceedings of the Good Parliament invalid; he sent Sir Peter de la Mare to gaol; and in the next year, 1377, he procured a carefully "packed" Parliament with his own steward as Speaker, which reversed all the decisions of its predecessor. This was an ominous event: the magnates were learning how to "pack" Parliaments so as to use them as instruments. One method of doing this was perhaps indicated by one of the petitions of the Good Parliament, which asked that there should be free elections, and that sheriffs should be forbidden to nominate knights of the shire without consulting the shire-courts. The "packed" Parliament, which now made (apparently) its first appearance, was to become a very common phenomenon in the next era.

With this political conflict was blended a religious conflict. In 1377 Wycliffe was cited to appear before the Bishop of London on a charge of heresy. John of Gaunt appeared in the cathedral in support of his protégé, and so browbeat the bishop that Wycliffe was released. Then a riot broke out in London; John of Gaunt's Savoy palace on the river-strand was sacked, and the unpopular duke had to escape from the city.

It was in the midst of these squabbles that Edward III fell into his last lethargy, and died, his mistress tearing the rings from his fingers ere she fled. So ended, in shame, a reign that had begun with splendid promise.

3. The Minority of Richard II (1377–1381)

Supremacy of Parliament and Bad Government.—The new king was the son of the Black Prince, and was only eleven years old. For a time his accession calmed the feuds of faction, and government was carried on by a Council in which all the factions were represented. Once more Parliament became active, with Peter de la Mare again Speaker of the House of Commons. It insisted upon electing members to the Council, and even upon electing the great officers of State during the minority. It seemed as if the supremacy of Parliament had been established. But Parliamentary supremacy did not mean efficient government. The war, under the management of John of Gaunt, went very badly. Even the coasts of England were not safe: Norman privateers sacked several towns on the south coast. And the cost of war was as high as ever. It was difficult to find sources of revenue. New experiments were tried: particularly in 1379 the experiment of a poll-tax, under which every male over sixteen had to pay according to his estate, the levy ranging from 4*d.* to £6 13*s.* 4*d.* A second poll-tax, yet more unjustly graded, was levied in 1380; this was the immediate occasion, though not the cause, of the Peasants' Rising of 1381.

Wycliffe and the Lollards.—Meanwhile the religious trouble was becoming more serious. In 1378 the Great Schism broke out, and two rival Popes, excommunicating one another, scandalised Christendom. This seems to have influenced Wycliffe, who in that year—no longer content to denounce the wealth of the clergy—began to attack the power of the Papacy, speaking of the Pope as antichrist, and even to deny many of the doctrines of the Church, notably transubstantiation. This lost him the support of John of Gaunt and of many magnates. But he had a strong body of supporters at Oxford, and many sympathisers among the country gentlemen. Moreover, he determined to make a democratic appeal. With the aid of his friends he translated the Bible into English (? 1382). He also organised a band of "poor priests," who spread very rapidly over the country, taking with them Wycliffe's Bible and copies of his sermons. These "Lollards" or Babblers, as their enemies called them, preached in the open, like Wesley long afterwards; and they had eager listeners. Their teaching was in key with the popular discontents which were spread abroad through the country. Wycliffe died in 1383, after his doctrines had been

condemned as heretical in 1382. It is doubtful whether his Poor Priests had begun their work before the Peasants' Rising of 1381, or whether they had any influence upon that portentous event. But for ten years after Wycliffe's death they were extremely active. Lollardy went on, in spite of persecution ; there were still Lollard preachers being punished in the reign of Henry VIII, when the Reformation was about to begin ; and even though it was driven underground, it had prepared the soil for that great change.

4. The Peasants' Rising

A Widespread Social Rising.—Suddenly, in the early days of June 1381, a revolt broke out among the peasants and working-folk over the greater part of England. It did not begin in one place and spread to the rest ; it was practically simultaneous, and even where no actual rebellion took place, as in remote Durham, the peasants were ready to rise. The grievances put forward differed in different parts of the country. In Essex and elsewhere the chief demand was for the abolition of villeinage, but in Kent, where villeinage had ceased to exist, the poll-tax was the principal ground of complaint, and elsewhere the tyranny of the ruling class in the towns, the oppressions of the Church, the burden of the war, and the misgovernment of the realm were denounced. It was, indeed, a sudden social upheaval, the first definite surging up of the hitherto voiceless labouring mass. But unquestionably the main driving force of the rising was a demand for the abolition of villeinage, and for the abandonment of the repression that had been carried on under the Statutes of Labourers. In many counties manor-houses were sacked, and, more particularly, the records defining the services due from the villeins were burnt ; and the most specific demand was that in future all land should be let on leasehold at 4*d.* an acre. Everywhere obscure leaders were forthcoming, bearing such emblematic names as Jack Straw ; and—in the south-eastern counties at any rate—there was evidently plan and purpose in the rising. It is impossible now to discover how far, or how, or by whom, this general rising was organised. Wycliffe's Poor Priests have been blamed, but they were just beginning their work. There were, however, other wandering apostles, like the famous John Ball, who had been peregrinating England at least since 1366. He preached a sort of primitive Communism, and the equalising of classes : "When Adam delved and

Eve span, who was then the gentleman ? " The whole rising lasted only a fortnight ; but during that fortnight the labouring classes of England were masters over the richest half of the realm.

Suppression of the Rising.—We know very little about the local details of this strange, sudden, general upheaval. But the main events happened in and around London : evidently there was a fixed intention to bring compulsion to bear upon the government—possibly to overwhelm it. The peasants of Kent, led by Wat the Tyler, the peasants of Essex, the peasants of Hertfordshire, all converged on London ; and though they committed disorders, there was leadership and organisation among them. The populace of London rose in sympathy with them, and refused to allow the gates to be closed against them. The government was taken by surprise. Only the fifteen-year-old king, with a gallant boy's courage and imagination, knew how to deal with them. He rode out to Mile End, and dispersed the Essex men with a promise that villeinage should be abolished. In his absence, the men of Kent and London swarmed into the Tower, dragged out the archbishop (who was also Chancellor) and other obnoxious ministers, and killed them ; burnt down John of Gaunt's palace of the Savoy ; destroyed Temple Bar and showed their hatred of the breed of lawyers. Once more the young king rose to the occasion, and faced the mob ; when Wat Tyler, behaving insolently, was killed by one of his retinue, he offered to take Wat's place and secure for them redress for their grievances. The pitiful, bewildered crowd dispersed ; and young Richard could boast that he had saved the crown of England.

Repression.—But now came the turn of government and Parliament—a Parliament filled with the masters of the revolting peasants and journeymen. They had no pity. They cancelled the king's promises as invalid and made under duress. And now began a process of repression and vengeance, all over England, carried out by men who had been frightened. The leaders (so far as they could be identified) were caught and hanged. Some 7,000 lives were taken. But the masters had learnt that it was dangerous to press their power too far. Conditions gradually improved ; and the grandsons of the revolting villeins were all free men. The rising was a failure, as it was bound to be : its leaders would not have known how to use victory if they had won it. Yet it was not wholly a failure. It was a landmark in the history of the English people.

5. An Attempt at Despotism and its Overthrow (1381–1399)

Richard's First Experiment.—Richard had shown courage and spirit in 1381, and there are grounds for believing that he would have liked to treat the peasants more leniently than Parliament had allowed him to do. He was beginning to resent the dictation of the group of court nobles who controlled affairs, and the meddlesome supremacy of Parliament; and while, as was natural in a boy, he enjoyed the pomp and luxury of kingship, he was forming high ideas of his prerogative. In the next few years, passing over the faction-leaders, he gave his confidence to a group of friends of his own—to his half-brothers the Hollands (sons of his mother's first marriage), who insolently abused their position; to a young noble of the oldest Norman aristocracy, de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whom he appointed Duke of Ireland and sent to govern that distressed land; and to Michael de la Pole, whom he created Earl of Suffolk and Chancellor. Pole was the son of a Hull merchant, who had seen long service in war and administration. Evidently Richard was trying to emancipate himself.

The Lords Appellant.—The party of opposition re-formed itself, under the lead of the king's youngest uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, with whom were associated a group of the greatest barons. In 1386 the opposition launched, through Parliament, an attack upon the king's advisers. Suffolk was impeached and condemned, probably unjustly; and a committee of eleven—like the Lords Ordainers under Edward II, a precedent which was openly quoted—was appointed with full powers for a year, to carry out a complete scheme of reform. For the moment Richard had to submit. But it was not for long. Defying Gloucester and his friends, he appealed to the judges, and got from them a ruling that the action of Parliament was an illegal invasion of the prerogatives of the crown. He released Suffolk, and called upon de Vere to raise an army. But Gloucester and his friends were too strong for him. At *Radcot Bridge* (December 1387) de Vere's force was dispersed; and once more king and kingdom were at the mercy of the opposition group. At a Parliament summoned for 1388, and known as the *Merciless Parliament*, Gloucester and four of his main colleagues, including the king's cousin, Henry Earl of Derby, the eldest son of John of Gaunt, together with the Earls of Arundel, Nottingham, and Warwick, laid a charge of treason against the king's supporters.

They were known as the Lords Appellant ; and they had evidently succeeded in packing the Parliament, for it carried out all their orders. Suffolk and de Vere, who had fled abroad, were outlawed ; a number of minor ministers were condemned to death as traitors, though they had been acting in accord with the king's will ; even the Chief Justice was executed for giving his judgment that the proceedings of 1386 were illegal, and the king's tutor, an honest old man, was also sent to the block. The plea made for the Lords Appellant was that they were preventing the establishment of despotism, and it may be true that Richard and his friends were looking in this direction. But the ferocity of the Merciless Parliament showed that Parliament itself had been made the tool of a vengeful group of nobles, and made it appear that there was a great deal to be said for an effective restoration of royal authority.

Richard's Constitutional Rule.—For the moment Richard bowed to the storm. He submitted, for a year, to the control of the Appellants. Then (being now twenty-three years old) he quietly announced to his Council that he proposed to assume control (1389). There was no resistance : apparently the Appellants had discredited themselves. Richard used his restored power with the greatest moderation. He made no attempt to bring back his exiled friends. He made no attack upon the Appellants. For nine years (1389–1397) he ruled as a constitutional monarch. He met his Parliaments yearly, and submitted, without impatience, to a considerable degree of control, even allowing his ministers to offer their resignation to Parliament. During these nine years the country was well governed ; and the dismal war with France was brought to an end in 1396. Many useful statutes were passed, including the definitive *Statute of Præmunire* (1393), whereby the acceptance of papal jurisdiction was made punishable by confiscation—a weapon which was subsequently to be used with great effect, by Henry VIII, against the clergy. During all these peaceful years Lollardy was growing steadily throughout England, and it had many supporters in Parliament ; but though Richard took the orthodox side, and tried to suppress this heresy, there was no persecution, such as followed in the next reign. The king made friends with his uncle John of Gaunt, who had been abroad during the troubles, on a wild-goose chase after the throne of Castile ; and John, who had mellowed with age, reconciled his son Henry of Derby, the Appellant, to the king, who later made him Duke of Hereford. Another of the Appellants,

also—Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham—was taken into high favour and later made Duke of Norfolk.

Richard as Despot.—Then, suddenly, in 1397, feeling the ground sure under his feet, the king reversed his policy, and set out to take the vengeance which he had apparently been cherishing all these nine years. The other three Appellants—Gloucester, Arundel, and Warwick—were arrested on a charge of conspiracy, and tried before Parliament. The king showed that he, as well as his opponents, could "pack" a Parliament; not content with that, he overawed it with a force of archers raised in his palatine county of Cheshire. The Appellants were condemned as traitors. Arundel was executed; Gloucester was secretly murdered; Warwick preserved his life by confessing to the conspiracy, but was banished. The estates of the traitors were divided among the king's friends. At a second packed Parliament, held at Shrewsbury, Richard's real aims were disclosed. He was voted a revenue for life, and thus freed from the incessant domination of Parliament; and a committee of eighteen, controlled by the king, was empowered to exercise the powers of Parliament after the dissolution. This has been represented, doubtless with truth, as the substitution of despotism for limited monarchy. It is, indeed, quite clear that Richard's aim was to emancipate the crown from the control of the great nobles, exercised through Parliament; and the misgovernment of the previous period, the anarchy that was to follow in the next period, and the ultimate relief with which the nation welcomed the establishment of a practical dictatorship under the Tudors a century later, give some justification for his action.

Banishment of Hereford.—But two of the Appellants, Norfolk and Hereford, were still unpunished, and more powerful than ever. In 1398 their turn came. Norfolk had taken alarm, and told Hereford of his fears; Hereford told the king; Norfolk gave Hereford the lie; and a solemn duel was arranged between them. Then Richard stepped in and banished both—Norfolk for life, Hereford for ten years. When in 1399 John of Gaunt died, the king, with the authority of his submissive committee of Parliament, took over the vast estates of the Duchy of Lancaster, though he had promised to allow Henry to succeed to them. His power now seemed to be impregnable. He was at last truly king and master of England. In May 1399, he thought it safe to go over to Ireland, whither he had already sent his heir, Roger Earl of March;

for Richard was the first of the English kings since Edward I to realise the importance of the Irish problem.

Fall of Richard II.—In his absence, the banished Hereford landed in Yorkshire, to claim his Lancastrian heritage. Some of the northern nobles, notably the Percies of Northumberland, came to join his standard. As he marched west, his forces grew, for the establishment of absolute monarchy had aroused many fears; and as his forces grew, so did his ambitions. Richard returned from Ireland, only to find that his power had evaporated as quickly as it had been created. He had to surrender to his cousin, and was taken to London as a prisoner.

The Revolution of 1399.—There, before a great Parliament held in Westminster Hall (where, three-and-a-half centuries later, another English king was to be sentenced to death) his enforced abdication was read to Parliament, together with a long series of charges of misgovernment, and of intent to destroy the constitution of the realm. The throne stood empty while Parliament accepted this momentous act. Then Henry of Lancaster arose and claimed it. He was not the nearest heir; that position belonged to his cousin, Edmund Earl of March.* But he claimed it by conquest; and he obtained it by the award of Parliament. This was indeed the culmination of parliamentary power. Parliament had dethroned a king, and chosen another in his place; and this in little more than a century from the time when its form was fixed by Edward I. The unhappy Richard, whose character and aims remain something of an enigma, disappeared from view, into Pontefract castle, where he died —doubtless by violence—within the year.† The era of revolution had reached its consummation.

6. The English Language: Chaucer and Wycliffe

During this dismal period of military failure and factious nobles, a great thing happened: the English language triumphed over the French, and the great days of English literature began.

Official Use of English.—The visible marks of this triumph can be dated. In 1362, at the beginning of the period, a statute enacted that henceforth legal proceedings should be carried on in

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

† Shakespeare chose the tragedy of Richard II as the theme for the first of his sequence of historical plays.

"the mother tongue," on the ground that French was now little known. In 1399, at the end of the period, Henry of Lancaster spoke in English when claiming the crown. Between these dates, English had become the normal language for parliamentary proceedings; henceforth French survived only for such formal purposes as the announcement of the royal assent to Bills—*le roy le veult*, a phrase still used. No doubt we have to thank the long wars with France for the rapidity of the change: it had become unpatriotic to speak French easily, and perhaps this was the best result of the Hundred Years' War.

English in Schools.—In another sphere, also, English was winning its victory. Since the Statute of Mortmain endowments of colleges and schools had largely taken the place of endowments of churches and monasteries; and many of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges, and a multitude of grammar schools all over England (often staffed by chantry priests, who, besides keeping school, made prayers for the founders' families) owe their foundation to the fourteenth century. In these grammar schools English took the place of French as the medium of instruction between 1340 and 1380, thanks to the good sense of obscure, forgotten schoolmasters; and the language began to be studied seriously. The upper classes, at least, were becoming literate, so that even country families, like the Pastons of Norfolk in the next century, were able to carry on a family correspondence in their "mother tongue."

Chaucer and Wycliffe.—Most noteworthy of all, this so long despised tongue — enriched, now, by many importations from French and Latin—began, in this period, to be the vehicle of a great literature. Geoffrey Chaucer, the first of the English poets whose work is still read for pleasure, was the son of a London tradesman who held several modest posts in the royal service; and his *Canterbury Tales*, with their fresh and musical gaiety, are thoroughly English in temper, however much they may have been influenced by Italian models.* They give us a picture of the real England of laughter and good humour, which seems, across the centuries, far more real than the strife of barons and the devastations of war. Far more than the greatest leaders of war and politics, Chaucer, who gave form and colour to the English speech, and placed it among those tongues

* Read the Prologue, at least. It will give you a better idea of fourteenth-century England than any amount of text-book pemmican.

which have been made immortal, deserves to rank among the builders of the British civilisation. With him may be named Langland, the peasants' poet, and Gower, the court-poet of Richard II, though these two are now read only by scholars. And while these are the fathers of English poetry, Wycliffe, whose translation of the Bible, together with his English pamphlets and sermons, were passing from hand to hand over the width of England, deserves to be hailed as the father of English prose. The spirit of a nation becomes indestructible when its temper and ideals are enshrined in a literature which is the common possession of all; and this great thing had come to the English during the era of revolution.

CHAPTER XI

PARLIAMENTARY SUPREMACY AND FOREIGN CONQUEST (1399–1450)

1. The Reign of Henry IV (1399–1413)

Significance of Henry IV's Accession.—The succession of Henry IV * to the crown is commonly described as an evidence of the supremacy of Parliament. In form it was so; and this led to the establishment of a number of parliamentary precedents which were to be of high importance in future ages. But in reality Henry's accession, in disregard of the claims of the direct heir, Edmund of March, represented the victory of one of the factions of great nobles, closely connected with the royal house, who had learnt to use Parliament as their instrument. This faction fight had been going on since the Good Parliament of 1376; it had reached an acute stage in the struggle between Richard II and the Lords Appellant; it was not ended by the Revolution of 1399, but continued through the fifteenth century until it wore itself out in the paroxysm of the Wars of the Roses. An exactly parallel process was going on in France. In both countries there had to be a heavy blood-letting for these "over-mighty subjects" before the course of national development could run smoothly again.

Livery and Maintenance.—We have already noted the

* Shakespeare's Henry IV (two parts) illustrates the difference between a poet's and a historian's view of events.

change which had taken place in the character of the great barons. They had ceased to aim at the destruction of national unity by establishing their local independence—Henry II and Edward I had ended that. They were now aiming rather at controlling the national government. Their numbers had markedly decreased, through the combination of great estates by marriage, or by royal grants when a line died out. They were beginning to use their great wealth to hire large bodies of retainers, who were abundantly available among the turbulent discharged soldiers of the long French wars. In place of the old feudal vassals, they had recently begun to extend their influence by the practices known as "livery and maintenance," against which Parliament had vainly protested under Richard II. "Livery" meant the issue of badges to men who became their pledged adherents; and knights of standing and even sheriffs did not disdain to wear the Bear and Ragged Staff of Warwick, or the Portcullis of Beaufort, or the White Rose of York, or the Swan of Gloucester. "Maintenance" meant the consideration which was given in return for the acceptance of "Livery"—namely, protection and support. This support often extended to the law-courts, which frequently dared not punish the misbehaviour of a liveryman of some powerful noble. These mighty nobles, with their bands of armed retainers, their enrolled liverymen, and their mutual alliances and rivalries, did not hesitate to resort to private war, or to challenge the power of the crown. It was they who fought the Wars of the Roses; and there had to be a drastic purge before this menace to public order and national unity could be dispersed.

Weakness of the Crown.—Because he had won the throne as a result of this kind of faction-struggle, Henry IV's position, and that of his successors, was always precarious. This showed itself in three ways—in his deference to the Church, in his submissiveness to Parliament, and in the frequent threats to his power with which he had to deal.

Persecution of the Lollards.—Henry's deference to the Church was shown by his readiness to join in stamping out Lollardy by persecution. In 1401, to please Archbishop Arundel, who had helped to bring him to the throne, he assented to the cruel statute *De Heretico Comburendo*, which first introduced wholesale burnings into England. The persecution was at its worst under his successor, Henry V. It drove Lollardy underground, and put a stop to its progress, but did not quench it.

Power of Parliament.—Henry's submissiveness to Parliament led to the establishment of some very important precedents. Under the Thirty-one Articles of 1406, the royal Council and the ministers practically came to be dependent upon Parliament—a premature anticipation of responsible government. Parliament also assumed a very complete control over expenditure, appointing their own treasurers to see how their grants were spent, and drastically cutting down the king's personal outlay. The system of Parliamentary supremacy was in fact anticipated in what has been called "the Lancastrian experiment." But the experiment was premature. Parliament was unable to check Livery and Maintenance, though it passed laws against it. It was unable to secure the freedom of its own elections, or to prevent the sheriffs from sending up names without any election in the shire-court—which, of course, meant that the House of Commons could very easily be packed. And parliamentary supremacy was notably unsuccessful in preventing the growth of public disorder; which was why the country welcomed the establishment of strong royal government under Edward IV and the Tudors.

Rebellions and Wars.—Finally, the first eight years of Henry IV were filled with rebellions and faction-wars. In 1400 a rebellion was organised by Richard II's half-brothers, the Hollands, to restore him to the throne. The rising was crushed, but to guard against a repetition of this danger the late king's dead body was brought from Pontefract and carried in a grim procession through the streets of London. In 1400 Owen Glendower led a great rising in North Wales, where Richard had many friends. He actually summoned a Welsh Parliament at Dolgelly; four expeditions failed to overcome him; and he was still resisting, though a fugitive, when Henry died. In 1402 the Scots invaded the north: they were defeated at *Homildon Hill* by the Percies of Northumberland, who had helped Henry to the throne. But in the next year, 1403, the Percies in their turn were in rebellion. They made an alliance with the Scots, with Owen Glendower, and with other barons, including one of the Mortimers, and proposed to place young Edmund of March (the direct heir of Edward III) on the throne. Henry thought it necessary to keep Edmund in confinement throughout his reign. This formidable conspiracy was defeated at the hard-fought battle of *Shrewsbury* (1403). Two years later Northumberland was once again in revolt, this time in conjunction with Mowbray of Nottingham and Scrope, Archbishop of York, who, like most of

the bishops of this period, belonged to one of the great noble families. Scrope was executed. But Northumberland escaped, and was once again at war in 1408, when he was killed at *Bramham Moor*.

Quiescence of Scotland and France.—This is a tedious catalogue of futile warfare, but it shows how dangerous were the great nobles with their bands of retainers. During the last years of his reign Henry had peace, but he was a worn-out man. The leading positions in his government had now fallen to the Beauforts, the Earl of Somerset and his brother the Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, illegitimate sons of John of Gaunt who were legitimised by Acts of 1392 and 1407, the last of which excluded them from the succession to the throne. It is probable that the reign would have seen even more troubles but for the fact that England's two dangerous neighbours, Scotland and France, were both disabled. In 1406 the young king James I of Scotland was captured at sea when on his way to be educated at the French court : he was kept a prisoner till 1423, and beguiled his leisure in the Tower of London by writing his poem, the *Kingis Quhair*. Meanwhile in France a great faction-fight like that of England had broken out in 1407, when the king's brother, the Duke of Orleans, was murdered by his cousin, the Duke of Burgundy—just as Richard II had been murdered by Henry IV. English troops played a part in the civil war that followed, now on one side, now on the other. In the next reign this French civil war was to give to the English an opportunity of reviving the ruinous ambitions of Edward III.

2. Henry V and the Conquest of France (1413–1422)

Henry V.—Henry V, who came to the throne when the unhappy Henry IV died of leprosy in 1413, has been acclaimed as one of the greatest of English sovereigns, and Shakespeare has chosen him as the model of a noble and patriotic king.* He was unquestionably a man of high ability, especially as a soldier, and he had enjoyed much experience, both in war and politics, during his father's later years. Legend, accepted by Shakespeare, says that he was a roisterer in his youth ; but from the moment of his accession he was a thin-lipped ascetic, and a devoted son of the Church. He proved his devotion

* *King Henry V* : read it. There is a good life of Henry V by C. L. Kingsford (Heroes of the Nations).

at the beginning of his reign by a fierce persecution of the Lollards, sacrificing his own friend Sir John Oldcastle. In despair, the Lollards attempted an outbreak, which was sternly crushed.

New War against France.—Henry fully realised the precarious condition of the monarchy, surrounded by over-mighty subjects. In the miserable civil war which was raging in France he saw an opportunity of diverting the attention of his nobles from home affairs, and finding occupation for their retainers. He therefore deliberately revived the claim of Edward III to the French crown, and set forth to conquer France, refusing to be bought off by great offers of territory which were made to him by the distracted French government. He wanted war more than territory. There has never been a more cold-blooded war of aggression. If Edward III's claim was weak, Henry V's was far weaker; for Edmund, Earl of March, was Edward's lineal descendant.

The Cambridge Plot.—The need for a diversion was shown on the very eve of the French war. The king's cousin, Richard Earl of Cambridge (son of the Duke of York), formed, with Lord Scrope and others, a conspiracy to put Cambridge's brother-in-law, Edmund of March, on the throne.* The conspirators were executed; their project was not even allowed to delay the French war.

Agincourt and Normandy.—Henry began his campaigns by besieging and capturing Harfleur, at the mouth of the Seine (1415). † Then, his small army being greatly weakened, he resolved to march north to Calais. Like Edward III in 1346, he was intercepted by an enormously larger French army, and won at *Agincourt* a victory even more dazzling than Cressy: with a loss of only 200 men, he slew 10,000 of the enemy, and proved that the English military tactics were as much superior to those of the French as they had ever been. In 1417 he began a systematic conquest of Normandy, which lasted two-and-a-half years (1417–1419).

The Treaty of Troyes.—This menace almost persuaded the rival French factions of Burgundians and Armagnacs to forget their feud. But during their negotiations John Duke of Burgundy was treacherously murdered (1419) by the Dauphin (heir to the French crown), later Charles VII. This threw the Burgundian party into

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

† For this war, see School Atlas, Plate 24*b*.

the arms of the English ; and the Queen of France, who hated her son, joined the combination. By the *Treaty of Troyes* (1420) it was agreed that Henry V should marry the daughter of the imbecile King Charles VI of France, should succeed him on the throne, and should meanwhile carry on the war against the Dauphin. This at once gave to Henry control over the greater part of France, north of the Loire. The Duke of Burgundy, who held most of the Netherlands as well as the Duchy and Free County of Burgundy, was practically an independent prince, holding much of his land not from France but from the Empire ; and in conjunction with him, Henry seemed to be irresistible. In 1421, indeed, the English received a check at *Baugé*, from a combined army of French and Scots. But this check was more than counterbalanced by the successes of 1422. The Anglo-Burgundian supremacy in northern France seemed to be firmly established, and the supine and listless Dauphin seemed unlikely to hold out long in his lands south of the Loire, when Henry V died suddenly in 1422, at the age of thirty-five.

Dangers of Henry V's Success.—He had won great military glory, and achieved a far more dazzling triumph than Edward III, though only with the aid of a powerful French party. But he had involved his country in an adventure which was to be even more disastrous than that of Edward III. His early death was a good thing for England. If he had succeeded in seating himself firmly on the throne of France, as he might have done, England would have been ruled from Paris, and there would have been an end of her parliamentary liberties. Even the English Parliament, amid its delight over these triumphs, had some misgivings, and insisted upon reviving a Statute of 1340 which had provided that the realm of England should never be subordinated to that of France. As it was, the triumphs of 1415–1422 sentenced England to half-a-century of misery.

3. The Loss of France (1422–1453)

Henry VI.—The warrior-king was succeeded by Henry VI, an infant of nine months ; and when, a few weeks after the death of Henry V, Charles VI also died, the unhappy child was burdened with the double crown of England and France. When he reached manhood, it appeared that Henry VI was no warrior, but a mild and gentle soul, who had inherited with his French grandfather's throne a strain of that grandfather's imbecility ; he was always under the

influence of some one stronger than himself—his ministers, his confessor, or his wife.* But even before he reached manhood the unreal empire which had been so easily acquired was practically lost. The loss was no doubt hastened by feuds among the rulers of England; but it was in any case inevitable. The survival of an unnatural English power in France depended wholly upon the continuance of strife between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs: when that came to an end, it melted away. Even before that, it

FIG. 14.—France in 1429.

was already doomed when the pure and noble figure of Joan of Arc lighted in the French people the flame of a genuine patriotism.

The Duke of Bedford.—Henry V had left the affairs of France to the care of the ablest of his brothers, John Duke of Bedford; and what a man could do, Bedford did, though he was hampered by the squabbles of the chief ministers in England (of which we shall see something in the next section) and especially by the irresponsible conduct of his feather-headed brother, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Bedford won two creditable victories, at

* Shakespeare has three plays on this reign: they are only partly of his authorship.

Cravant (1423), and *Verneuil* (1424); and so long as he was able to retain the close friendship of Burgundy, he held his own. But the Burgundian alliance was imperilled when Humphrey of Gloucester claimed the counties of Holland and Hainault, in the name of his quasi-wife (1425); for Burgundy would brook no rival in these regions. The alliance was further weakened when the sudden appearance of Joan of Arc turned the tide in favour of France.

Joan of Arc.—This was one of the miracles of history. The English were beleaguering Orleans (1428), the key of the Loire; if it fell, the south would lie open; yet the wretched Dauphin lay inert. At this moment appeared the peasant girl of Domrémy,* proclaiming that heavenly visitors had sent her to save France. The spirit which she inspired drove back the English from Orleans, and won the battle of *Patay* (1429). Then, advancing into her own country of Champagne, the heroic Maid of Orleans cleared that region, and made it possible for Charles VII to be crowned at Reims, the hereditary crowning-place of the French kings (1429). This done, she would fain have gone back to her cottage home; but she was kept at work, because she had brought into being a new spirit among the French soldiery. Failing before Paris, she had nevertheless won most of the Ile de France, when she fell into the hands of the Burgundians (1430), who sold her for 10,000 pieces of silver to the English. Tried before a tribunal of French clergy, she was burnt for a witch at Rouen (1431). Her death sanctified the spirit of French patriotism which her life had created, and thenceforward an English victory was unthinkable.

The Loss of France.—In 1435 a peace conference was called at Arras. The English refused to accept reasonable terms; whereupon Burgundy abandoned the English alliance, and the only factor which offered a chance of victory was removed. When, in the same year, Bedford died, the cause was hopeless. Paris was lost; by 1437 only Normandy, Henry V's first conquest, remained in English hands. Through seven years' hard fighting (1437–1444) Talbot Earl of Shrewsbury and Richard Duke of York held on to Normandy. Then came a truce, signed at Tours (1444), which gave a breathing-space till 1449, when the war was renewed. A French invading army overran Normandy with ease, helped by a general rising of the peasantry. In 1450 a last desperate effort was

* Andrew Lang's *Joan of Arc* is worth reading; still more, Shaw's *St. Joan*.

made to save something from the wreck ; but at *Formigny* the English army was destroyed, and nothing was left of all Henry V's conquests. Next year the French overran Guienne, which had been under the English crown since 1154. A last expedition was sent out in 1453 to regain this ancient possession, under the gallant old warrior, Talbot of Shrewsbury. But it was wiped out at *Castillon* (1453). The last fragment of Henry II's great empire was thus lost, almost exactly three centuries after he came to the throne. Save the single town of Calais, not an acre of French soil now remained in English hands. All the blood and treasure that had been poured forth in these centuries was wasted ; and a long, romantic, futile chapter of English history was at an end.

4. The Rising Tide of Disorder (1422–1450)

The Unreal Power of Parliament.—While the French dominions were being lost, at home England was gradually lapsing into anarchy. In appearance, indeed, the minority of Henry VI was a period of parliamentary supremacy. Parliament set aside Henry V's arrangements in regard to the government of the realm during his son's minority, and insisted that there should be no regent, but that government should be carried on by the Council, over which (in form) it wielded full control. It was in this period also that Parliament secured effective control over legislation. Whereas previously it had been content to send up petitions for laws, now it cast them into the form of *Bills*, which, when passed by both Houses, might be accepted or rejected, but could not be amended, by the king. Finally, in this period Parliament defined the *franchise* for its own election, limiting the right of voting (1430) to the holders of land in freehold of the annual value of forty shillings or more, and thus excluding the mass of ordinary suitors at the shire-court. But in actual fact the omnipotence of Parliament was only a cover for the rule of factions of nobles. The art of "packing" Parliaments had by now been perfected ; and the advantage in this regard lay with the faction that controlled government, because they could appoint the sheriffs, and issue instructions to them. Possibly the Act of 1430 was designed to check this practice ; but if so, it was of no avail. As the period wore on, meetings of Parliament became more and more unreal, mere gatherings of factions and their liverymen ; they

also became more and more turbulent. The Parliament of 1426, for example, is known as the Parliament of Bats (or bludgeons) because, government having forbidden members to bear arms, they arrived with clubs instead.

Growing Disorder.—Moreover, Parliament was impotent to impose obedience upon the great nobles and their retainers. Though the courts of law went on with their work, and did justice between ordinary folk, they were generally unable to bring the great men or their liverymen to book. The records of the period are significantly slight. But it is clear that disorder was growing. In 1437, for example, Master William Poole of Liverpool, a liveryman of Lord Stanley's, carried away the wife of Sir John Butler, who (knowing that the courts could not help him) appealed to Parliament for redress. Parliament outlawed Master Poole. But this did no good ; nothing did any good until Lord Stanley withdrew his protection. The letters of the Paston family in Norfolk, which have been preserved, abound in evidence of the growing anarchy.

Beaufort and Gloucester.—The political history of the period is mainly the story of the rivalry of factions for the control of government. At first there was bitter rivalry in the Council between Humphrey of Gloucester, the young king's uncle, and Cardinal Beaufort, son of John of Gaunt. Gloucester, a patron of letters but a very irresponsible politician, lost influence after his foolish adventure in Hainault (1425) ; and the Cardinal became the controlling force. With him were associated his nephews, the Beaufort brothers, successively Earls of Somerset, and the Earl of Suffolk, grandson of Richard II's unpopular minister. They were inclined to favour a peace policy ; while Gloucester, backed by the Duke of York, was for an active war policy. In 1444 the Beauforts arranged the Truce of Tours, and married the young king to a French wife, Margaret of Anjou, who threw herself whole-heartedly on to the Beaufort side in the faction fight. In 1447 they summoned a packed Parliament at Bury St. Edmunds, and condemned Gloucester as a traitor : he died shortly afterwards—probably murdered—while his friend the Duke of York was practically exiled to Ireland. In the same year died Cardinal Beaufort, who had been, on the whole, a sane and moderating influence.

The Rival Roses.—The strife of factions was beginning to be acute, and it is significant that while the leader of one faction was now the Duke of York, who inherited the claim of Edmund of

March to the throne,* the ruling faction of the Beauforts (though excluded from the succession by the Act of 1407) were, as sons of John of Gaunt, also possible claimants to the throne if Henry VI should die without heirs; and as yet he had no son. This was the situation when in 1450 the loss of Normandy brought an outburst of popular fury against Somerset and Suffolk as responsible for this national humiliation. The loss of Normandy, and the final ruin of the English cause in France, was in fact the signal for that concluding frenzy of the strife of factions which is called the Wars of the Roses. The growing anarchy was almost at its height; and the needed purge of the over-mighty subjects was about to begin.

CHAPTER XII

THE WARS OF THE ROSES AND THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES (1450–1485)

1. The Brewing of Civil War (1450–1459)

The Fall of Suffolk: Jack Cade.—The humiliation of defeat in France brought about the beginning of open conflict between the rival factions. Its first result was to discredit the Beaufort faction, which had so long held sway. In 1450 Parliament impeached the Duke of Suffolk. The king had to banish him; but on his way to Calais he was intercepted by one of the king's ships, and brutally beheaded over the gunwale of a boat. Government was indeed impotent when the crew of a royal ship could act thus. Popular anger was still further illustrated by a formidable rising in Kent, headed by an adventurer called Jack Cade, who pretended to be descended from the Mortimers. This was not a social upheaval like that of 1381; villeinage had by this time almost disappeared. It was simply an expression of anger against bad government. For a time the rebels dominated London, and the king had to flee. But they were soon dispersed. A little later Richard of York returned from Ireland—not to claim the throne, for he was scrupulously moderate, but to take the lead of the opposition to the Beauforts.

* See Genealogical Table *B*, at the end of the volume.

But the fierce and angry young queen would have no patience with opposition. York had to raise troops to make his journey across England safe ; while the detested Duke of Somerset, returning from his shameful defeat in Normandy, was welcomed and honoured at the Court. With Margaret's support, he still controlled the government.

York, Neville, and Somerset.—The next four years saw the organisation of opposition under the Duke of York. His chief supporters were the Nevilles, the younger branch of a great northern family, who during these years accumulated extraordinary wealth and power. Richard Neville the elder had married the heiress of the Earldom of Salisbury, and had given his sister in marriage to the Duke of York. His son, Richard Neville the younger, married the heiress of the earldom of Warwick, and later became known as the king-maker.* After his father's death in 1460 he was the wealthiest man in England, owning more than 150 manors in every part of the country, while other members of his family were only less powerful. This strong faction strove, at first, only to get rid of Somerset. But both sides had large bodies of armed retainers, and civil war was always in sight. The majority of the nobles supported Somerset, because they had no objection to inefficient government. The townsfolk, on the other hand, generally supported York, because they hoped for better government ; though, when fighting began, they did not go so far as to support him in the field. Wherever possible, they shut their gates and attended to their own business, leaving the rival factions to slaughter one another. It was the distinctive feature of the coming war that it was carried on exclusively by the retainers of the nobles, and was crossed and complicated by all sorts of private feuds.† It was a war of murderous battles ; there were no sieges, and no treaties.

York's Protectorate.—In 1453 the king lost his reason. York, as the first prince of the blood, was appointed Protector, and promptly threw Somerset into prison. But he governed with moderation ; and when, in the same year, a son was born to Henry VI, the Regent recognised him as heir to the crown. As yet the Yorkist claim ‡ was kept in the background. In 1454 Henry recovered ;

* There is a good short life of Warwick, the King-maker, by Sir Charles Oman (English Men of Action).

† Stevenson's story, *The Black Arrow*, gives a good idea of these faction wars.

‡ See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

and York's Protectorate came to an end. The fierce young queen restored Somerset, and even expelled York from the Council. Thereupon York—feeling, not without reason, that his life was not safe—took up arms ; and at the *First Battle of St. Albans* killed Somerset and captured the king, who again lost his reason. For the next five years the Yorkist influence was on the whole predominant. But all the time the angry queen was building up her party. In 1459 she was ready to challenge the supremacy of York ; and with that began the real war of Lancaster and York.

FIG. 15.—The Wars of the Roses.

2. DOWNFALL OF THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER (1459–1461)

Ferocity of the War.—The three years' war which followed (1459–1461) was fought with extraordinary ferocity : no quarter was given to the leaders on either side, and sometimes the whole of the defeated army was slaughtered. As each faction in turn got the upper hand, it called packed parliaments to pass wholesale Acts of Attainder, whereby its opponents were condemned to death and their estates confiscated, without a semblance of trial. The use of Parliament to give a colour of legality to these cruel acts of vengeance

completed the discredit of Parliament; and the Act of Attainder, invented during these years, was a very bad precedent for the future.

The Course of the War.—At the outset, the Lancastrians had the better of the struggle. In 1459, though the Yorkists won a skirmish at *Blore Heath*, they found their position hopeless, and their leaders had to flee—York to Ireland, the Nevilles to Calais. In 1460, however, they landed again. Warwick defeated the main Lancastrian force at *Northampton* (1460), and captured the king; Margaret had to flee to Wales, where her cause was supported by the Welsh family of Tudor, one of whom had married a Beaufort * and received the title of Earl of Richmond. But the Lancastrians of the north rose in force, and Margaret joined them. At *Wakefield* (1460) York was defeated and killed; and the queen, marching south with the triumphant northerners, defeated Warwick at the *Second Battle of St. Albans* (February 1461), and recaptured the unhappy Henry VI. This seemed to ensure the victory of the Lancastrian party. But meanwhile York's son, Edward Earl of March, had overwhelmed the Welsh Lancastrians at *Mortimer's Cross* (February 1461); and next month the main Lancastrian army was utterly destroyed, with hideous slaughter, at *Towton* (March 1461)—the decisive battle of the war. Those of the Lancastrian leaders who were not killed in fight were beheaded after the battle. Queen Margaret (the heart of the Lancastrian party) took refuge, with her husband and son, in Scotland. Thence, in 1463, she made a fresh attempt to raise her standard in the north. But the last Lancastrian levies were defeated (1464) at the battles of *Hedgeley Moor* and *Hexham*, which were followed by the most bloody executions that had yet taken place. England lay at the feet of the Yorkists.

3. Edward IV and the Breach with Warwick (1461–1471)

Edward IV.—Even before the decisive battle of Towton, Edward of York had been declared king by Warwick, to whose wealth, energy, and ability he owed his success. He was an able, indolent, dissolute, heartless young man. His first act, on assuming the throne, was to pass through the usual packed Parliament a wholesale Act of Attainder, condemning fourteen peers and one hundred lesser supporters of the fallen house. Henry VI was declared a

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

usurper. When, in 1466, the poor weak-minded man was captured, he was thrown into the Tower, where he was not even supplied with the common decencies. His irreconcilable queen and her son Edward, after their last desperate throw in the North, went into exile, lacking even the means to feed themselves.*

The New Monarchy.—The slaughters and confiscations of the last few years had materially altered the position of the monarchy. Henceforth, except in the event of war, the king could "live of his own," and need not resort to Parliament. The period of parliamentary supremacy therefore came to an end with the accession of Edward IV ; and, since it had been identified with a period of misgovernment and disorder, nobody regretted it. The strong monarchy which Richard II had tried to establish became a reality under Edward IV and his successors.

Edward and Warwick. — But there was still one "overmighty subject" who could not be overlooked. Warwick, who had been the richest man in England before the war, was now more powerful than ever. For a time, indeed, he was practically the ruler of England : Edward IV, revelling in his pleasures, seemed content to leave the reality of power to the Kingmaker. And Warwick was not without statesmanship. In the twenty years since 1450, a great change had come over the aspect of affairs in France. The monarchy was re-establishing itself ; under the crafty Louis XI † (who succeeded to the French throne in the same year (1461) in which Edward IV hewed his way to the English throne) it was entering upon the last throes of the long struggle with the great feudal states, and especially with Burgundy. ‡ Should England now make friends with France, or make an alliance with Burgundy, and return to the miserable part she had played in the past ? Edward's sister Margaret was married to Charles of Burgundy. But Warwick was for making peace with France, by marrying Edward to a French princess. Edward allowed him to go on with negotiations, and then inflicted upon him a grave slight by announcing his marriage to an attractive widow of a minor Lancastrian family, Elizabeth Woodville. Not only so, but he showered upon her connections—both her brothers and the sons of her first marriage with Sir John Grey—so

* Scott's *Anne of Geierstein* deals with this period.

† There is a brilliant picture of Louis XI and his wiles in Scott's *Quentin Durward*.

‡ For the Burgundian territories, see the larger Atlas, Plates 36–37.

many lands and honours that it was obvious he was trying to build up a counterpoise to Warwick's power.

The Fall of Warwick.—Too proud to submit to slights, Warwick made friends with the king's brother, the Duke of Clarence, giving him in marriage his eldest daughter, heiress of his vast estates, and dangling before him the prospect of the crown. In 1469 a new civil war broke out. It was full of strange vicissitudes. At one moment (1469) Edward was a prisoner in the hands of the Nevilles. Next year (1470) his power revived, and Warwick and Clarence had to flee to France, where Louis XI persuaded the Kingmaker to take up the cause of Margaret and her son. In the autumn they returned to England, and it was Edward's turn to cross the seas, taking refuge with his brother-in-law the Duke of Burgundy. The pitiful old Henry VI was brought out from the Tower, and again recognised as king (October 1470). But his second reign lasted only seven months. In 1471 Edward landed in Yorkshire. Joined by his brother Clarence (who was disappointed not to have been made king), he defeated and killed Warwick at *Barnet* (April 1471); and a month later the Lancastrian forces which Margaret had raised in the west country were destroyed at *Tewkesbury*. The young prince Edward was butchered in cold blood after the battle. A little later the harmless old king Henry VI was murdered in the Tower; the tragic queen, after five years' imprisonment, was allowed to go abroad to die. The last of the male line of Beaufort had also been killed at Tewkesbury. No descendant of John of Gaunt remained to claim the throne save a boy of fourteen, Henry of Richmond, son of the Welsh knight who had married Margaret Beaufort.

Murder of Clarence.—The House of York seemed to be firmly planted on the throne as a result of all this butchery. The nobles were tamed; Parliament was no longer troublesome. One last victim was called for; in 1478 the king's brother Clarence, who had been disputing with his youngest brother, Gloucester, the succession to the Kingmaker's lands, was attainted of high treason, and put to death in the Tower. Edward was able to enjoy his licentious pleasures in peace, until he died, a worn-out roué at the age of forty-two, in 1483.

Edward IV and Louis XI.—One episode only in his reign deserves record. In 1475 his Burgundian brother-in-law persuaded him to join forces for a new attack on France. This might have led to a renewal of the French wars. Happily the indolent king

preferred money to honour, and allowed himself to be bought off by Louis XI at the Treaty of *Pecquigny* (1475). The last important event in the reign of Edward IV was an expedition against Scotland, led by his brother Richard of Gloucester, who ravaged the eastern Lowlands and conquered Berwick (1482).

4. The Fall of the House of York (1483–1485)

Murder of the Princes.—A final act remained to be played in this grim tragedy of carnage and treachery. Edward IV left behind him two young sons, the elder of whom was proclaimed king as Edward V. But their uncle, Richard of Gloucester, had resolved to take the throne for himself. He arrested the boy-king's natural guardians, the relatives of his mother, Earl Rivers and Sir Richard Grey, and had them executed without trial. He treated in the same way some of their father's most trusted friends, notably Lord Hastings, a loyal adherent of the Yorkist cause throughout the war. He inveigled the younger of the two princes from his mother, who had taken sanctuary at Westminster, and then put them both in the Tower of London. Having thus cleared his way to the throne, he was crowned with due religious solemnity.* At some later date, his young nephews were secretly murdered: their unknown graves were not found until 1674. It is not certain whether Richard was responsible for the murder or not.

Conspiracy against Richard III.—Even the blood-sated England of the fifteenth century could not tolerate these horrors; and a man who thrives by treachery must look for treachery from his supporters. Rebellion broke out in many parts of England. The friends of Edward IV joined hands with the surviving partisans of Lancaster, and planned to bring over young Henry of Richmond and marry him to the daughter of Edward IV, so that the long feud might be ended. Even the Duke of Buckingham, who had been Richard's right-hand man in his nefarious progress to the throne, joined in the conspiracy. But Richard III was an able and vigorous man; the revolts of 1483 were all suppressed; and Buckingham, in his turn, went to the block.

The Battle of Bosworth.—Nevertheless the conspiracies still went on. The king's own attorney-general was in touch with

* Read Shakespeare's *Richard III.*

the conspirators. Richard knew that plots were afoot, and struck wildly in the dark, deepening his reputation for tyranny. At length, in 1485, Henry of Richmond, with a little band of Lancastrian and Yorkist exiles, and some money and a few troops raised in France, landed at Milford Haven, knowing that, as a Welshman, he was sure of support in Wales. His forces grew as he marched eastward across England, but he was still outnumbered by two to one when he faced Richard at *Bosworth Field.* But part of the king's army deserted him; and Lord Stanley, as yet undeclared, joined battle on the winning side. Richard was killed, fighting manfully; and his crown, found in a hawthorn bush, was placed on his rival's head. The Wars of the Roses were over; and with them ended a long era of English history.

5. The Condition of England

We have traced a long story of futile and destructive foreign wars, and still more ugly and ruinous faction fights at home. What had been the effect of all this upon the development and the condition of the people at home?

Distress in England.—Undoubtedly the period had been one of great misery for large sections of the nation. There were frequent pestilences and famines, and the population recovered only very slowly from the ravages of the Black Death. There were probably not more than 3,000,000 people in England when Bosworth Field was fought. Although the courts of law went on working even when things were worst, and Sir John Fortescue, a writer of the time, could boast that there was better justice in England than in any other land, they could neither control nor punish the great men and their retainers; while government was too weak to prevent brigandage, which was rampant especially in the wilder parts of the country. Nor could it put a stop to piracy, even in the home waters of England. The North Sea and the English Channel were infested with pirates; they often sacked or plundered towns on the coast, or kidnapped people for a ransom; and frequent raids by the French added to the trouble. The fifteenth century was a time of general distress, which made men realise the need for a strong government; this was why they cheerfully accepted the exercise of almost despotic power by the Tudors.

Social Changes.—At the same time, great social and economic

changes were taking place which were on the whole beneficial, though, like all such changes, they were accompanied by distress. In brief, the mediæval social system was breaking up, and was being replaced by something like the modern system which we know. The essence of the change was that men's rights and duties, and their place in society, were ceasing to be governed by the *status* into which they were born, and were gradually coming to be governed by free *contract* between individuals.

The End of Serfdom.—In the rural districts the manorial system had broken down very rapidly since the Black Death. Landlords were ceasing to work their estates by means of the customary services due from their vassals : they were more and more letting out their land for a money rent. Villeins had become "copyholders," paying a fixed annual sum in lieu of services. The class of free labourers, working for wages, had enormously increased ; and their wage-rates were being regulated by the Justices of the Peace in each county. Workers were beginning to move about more freely, and this was increased in two ways, first by the growth of woollen and other manufactures, which drew workers into the towns, and secondly by the recruitment of troops for the French wars or for the armed bands of the nobles. The shortage of labour, which had always been acute since the Black Death, had put much land out of tillage, and landlords were more and more turning to sheep-rearing, because the growth of the woollen manufacture gave them good sales for their wool. We must not exaggerate the extent to which these changes had gone in 1485. They were to go on more rapidly in the next period. But the mediæval social order was dying ; and through the dead wood new life was sprouting.

The Woollen Trade.—Even greater was the change which was taking place in the towns, and in the manufacturing system. Most marked of all was the extraordinarily rapid growth of the cloth industry. England was now spinning and weaving the great bulk of her wool crop, which was now vastly greater than ever before ; and she was doing a large export trade in woollen goods. Other industries also were growing, but the woollen industry dwarfed the rest. The districts in which it was most actively carried on—Norfolk, the centre of the worsted trade, and the west of England—were very prosperous : their prosperity can be measured by the number of fine houses, town halls, and churches which date from this period. The control of manufacture was still mainly in the hands

of the "misteries" or gilds, but a new class of capitalist employers was beginning to appear, who bought the wool from the farmer, gave it out to be spun in the cottages, supplied the yarn to weavers, fixing the styles according to which they were to weave, and finally marketed the finished cloth at home or abroad. This new system was in the future to have a hard fight with the "mistery" system of regulation before it won its victory, but its rise is another sign of the coming of modern conditions.

Oversea Trade.—It was largely because of the growth of the woollen industry that this period also saw a great increase of English foreign trade. A good deal of the oversea trade was, of course, still in the hands of foreigners: Venetian and Genoese ships came to London and Southampton; the Hanseatic traders still had their great Steelyard as headquarters in London, and their privileges were increased by Edward IV as a reward for the aid they had given him when he returned to England in 1471. But they no longer dominated the trade of England as they had once done, and the Steelyard ceased to be of importance during the next century. The reason was that English merchants were becoming more and more active in foreign trade. Companies of "Merchant Adventurers" were being formed during the fifteenth century for the development of oversea commerce. Their members subscribed for the upkeep of "factories" in foreign ports, and they often sailed in fleets for protection against the pirates. English traders, during the fifteenth century, had beaten down the monopoly of trade with the Baltic hitherto enjoyed by the Hanseatic League; they were actively trading with Norway and even with Iceland; they were finding their way to Spain and the Mediterranean; and the wine trade with France was of great proportions.

The Trading Class and the Government.—Because of this growth of manufacture and commerce, the merchants of London and other towns were now so wealthy that they were able to undertake the financial work of making advances to the crown, which had previously been in the hands of Jews, Lombards, and Florentines. And for this reason they were able to exercise a considerable influence over the policy of government. To this must be attributed the activity of the Parliaments of this period in trade matters. They were impotent to deal with the unruly nobles; but trade policy was another matter. Hence we find that England gradually adopted a policy of protection for native industries, and endeavoured steadily

to encourage the development of English shipping and oversea trade. The Navigation Act of Richard II (1395), which provided that English goods should be carried in English ships, could not always be enforced ; but it was the first of a series of measures aiming at the same end. English shipping was, in fact, growing rapidly—making ready for the greater achievements of the next age.

6. Wales, Ireland, and Scotland

While England was undergoing the fiery discipline we have described, the other three nations made little progress.

Wales.—There had been a revival of Welsh national sentiment under Owen Glendower (see p. 131), but it was not strong enough to balance the involvement of Wales in English disputes, which had been increasing steadily since Edward I. Welsh soldiers were constantly employed in the Scottish and French wars : Shakespeare's Fluellen (Llywelyn) is an example. The Marcher Lords, whose followers were all Welsh, played, as we have seen, a principal part in all the troubles from Richard II to Henry VII, and in the fiercest fighting of the Wars of the Roses. The Yorkist claim to the throne came through the Earl of March ; while the last and victorious upholder of the Lancastrian cause, Henry Tudor, was the son of a Welshman who had married an English princess. The succession of a Welshman to the throne of England in 1485 marked, indeed, the end of the relative isolation of Wales, and prepared the way for its complete incorporation in England in 1536.

Ireland.—The history of Ireland throughout this period is a miserable story of pure anarchy. Since the invasion by Edward Bruce, the English crown had never succeeded in establishing its authority beyond the narrow and shrinking limits of the Pale, and the Irish Parliament made no pretence to represent more than the Pale. Beyond these limits, and even within them, Celtic usages were steadily swamping English ; and the most that could be done was to pass the futile Statute of Kilkenny (1366), which tried to prevent inter-marriage and the use of Irish dress and customs. Nominal viceroys succeeded one another ; they were all alike impotent. The only king, from Edward I to Henry VII, who took any interest in Ireland was Richard II ; and his visit—which was welcomed as giving some hope of order—was interrupted by the call to return to England to meet defeat and disaster at the hands of Henry IV. The

only viceroy who made any impression was Richard Duke of York (1447–1450); but his stay was too short to do more than build up a Yorkist party among the Irish magnates. In general, Ireland during all this long period was a riot of anarchy and private war between uncontrolled chieftains and barons of Norman descent. A new, though not a more happy, era in the troubled history of Ireland was to begin in the next period.

Scotland.—The story of Scotland during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is almost equally dismal. Until the time of Edward I, English usages had gradually been gaining influence in Scotland, and order had been improving. But the ferocity of the War of Independence put a stop to that. Henceforward England was the national enemy, with whom war was unceasing; and it was rather from France that there came the influences which shaped the Scottish system of law and government, so far as feudal anarchy allowed it to develop. At one moment, indeed, a peaceful union of the two countries seemed to be within reach. In 1353 David II, having driven out Edward Balliol, and being childless and unwilling to see the throne pass to the descendants of his sister Marjorie (wife of Walter the Steward), who were of doubtful legitimacy, made a treaty with Edward III whereby the crowns were to be united after his death. But the nobles and people of Scotland would have none of this arrangement; and in 1371 the ill-fated Stewart line succeeded to the Scottish throne.* For two centuries every king of this line (except Robert II, who was almost an imbecile) succeeded as a child, spent his manhood in trying to overcome the feudal anarchy which had grown up during his minority, and died of violence before his task was achieved. † The history of Scotland, down to the end of the fifteenth century, is a history of devastating border warfare, incessant private feuds between turbulent nobles and clan chiefs, and ineffectual attempts, at intervals, to establish the royal power. It was not until James VI (I of England) was able to bring to bear the strength of England that anything like stable peace or order was established in Scotland. Yet, in some vital respects, Scotland was advancing. She had equipped herself with two universities—St. Andrews in 1414 and Glasgow in 1451; and the poor scholar, "cultivating the Muses on a little oatmeal," who was to be the glory

* See Genealogical Table D, at the end of the volume.

† Scott's *Fair Maid of Perth* gives a good idea of this period.

of Scotland, was already making his appearance. Scottish literature, too, had come to birth. The captive king James I, who wrote *The Kingis Quhair*, was only one of a group of Scottish poets: Scotland, indeed, was producing more and better literature than England in the fifteenth century.

7. The End of the Middle Ages

Signs of a New Era.—In many ways it is evident to the student of the fifteenth century that the old order was passing, and a new one rising. We have already seen, in England, some of the evidences of this great change: the break-up of the manorial system; the substitution of "contract" for "status" as the basis of relations between men; the growth of towns and trade and manufactures; the substitution of national patriotism for feudal loyalty as the cement of society. But there were other and even greater changes which have led historians to fix, with singular unanimity, upon the later years of the fifteenth century as the close of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times. (1) The coming of gunpowder brought a social revolution. Its development was gradual; but it destroyed for ever the supremacy of the mail-clad knight and the impregnability of his castle, upon which the social order of the Middle Ages had rested; and the fact that private persons could seldom afford the cost of trains of artillery helped to secure the power of national governments. (2) The national State was coming into being. England was the first country to be inspired by the national spirit; but France had learnt its strength in the troubles of the Hundred Years' War, and Spain was forging her way to unity in these years. States which are unified by national feeling are stronger than others; the national States of Western Europe were to dominate the course of events for the next four centuries, and their rivalries were to provide the stuff of history. (3) That great movement of the human spirit which is known as Humanism or the Renascence was at work all over Europe: it was the spirit that glorified human reason, the spirit of free inquiry, the spirit of self-assertion as against the self-abnegation which was the ideal of the Middle Ages. This potent solvent of old traditions was already at work; it was to have a revolutionary influence in the next century. (4) Just in time to give redoubled force to this intellectual movement came the momentous invention of printing, which made possible the swift and easy diffusion of ideas and of

knowledge. Caxton had set up the first printing-press in England in 1476, having learnt the new invention from its German discoverers; and it might reasonably be argued that the date of the first printing-press is a better dividing-line between mediæval and modern times than the date of the Battle of Bosworth. (5) Finally—and perhaps, for the history of the British peoples, most important of all—the age of the great geographical discoveries was beginning. Already the Portuguese were creeping down the coast of Africa; two years after Bosworth Field they rounded the Cape of Good Hope; and before the century closed the sea-routes to India and to America, which were to be so vital to the British peoples, had been marked out. Through all the long centuries of their early history, the British peoples, isolated in their islands, had lain on the remotest edge of the known world. They were now to lie at the very central point of the World's great traffic routes. That fact alone differentiates the modern age from the long centuries which preceded it.

English Characteristics.—All the process of development which we have been studying in these first two Books may be regarded as a training of the British peoples for the superb opportunities which now (without their knowledge) lay before them. The discipline which the English had undergone (and which was to be extended from them to the other three nations) mainly accounts for the character of the work done by the British peoples in the coming centuries. The essence of this discipline was that the English had become, in certain essential respects, a *free* people, and it was their freedom which gave character to their future work.

(1) In the first place the English, alone among the peoples of Western Europe or of the world, had worked out a means of expressing the national mind and of controlling government. It is true that the powers of Parliament had been prematurely developed, and that there was now a strong reaction towards royal power. But even the semi-despotic Tudors, unlike the rulers of Europe, had no standing army to enforce their will, but had to depend upon their people; and had no trained, submissive officials to act as their agents, but had to rely upon the Justices of the Peace—the independent country gentlemen.

(2) Again, in England, as in no other country, the mass of the people had won freedom from the dominion of tribal chiefs or feudal lords, and were subject only to the law of the land. The law might be cruel or unjust; but it was THE LAW, not the arbitrary will of individuals. In other words, in England the Reign of Law had

been established : it was only by process of law that a man could be rightfully constrained to any act. No doubt the law had often been violently overridden ; but the principle was established, and all that was needed was that government should be strong enough to enforce it. Even amid the Wars of the Roses, Sir John Fortescue could boast, in his book *The Governance of England*, that the sovereignty of law was the greatest glory of his country.

(3) Yet again, in England men of all ranks were called upon to take part in administering and enforcing the law—as justices of the peace, as members of juries, as elected village officers or rulers of the towns. The law was *theirs*, their *common* law, not something enforced upon them by a master from above, and not alterable save by the assent of their representatives.

(4) Finally, in England, as in no other country, there was no rigid legal distinction between unalterable castes. The labourer could thrive to be a yeoman ; the substantial yeoman could assume the rank and functions of a knight ; there was no cleavage between the country gentleman and the noble, whose son was only a country gentleman, whereas in France or Germany he was hereditarily noble ; the journeyman could thrive to be a master ; the prosperous trader might be made a peer of the realm.

These social features were the outcome of long centuries of blind struggle and unconscious development. Without an appreciation of them it is impossible to understand the achievements of the great age upon which the curtain was now about to rise.

Supplementary Reading on Book II

Book II (pp. 81–204) of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* covers the same ground as this Book. The most useful chapters for supplementary reading are Chap. I (European Influence), Chap. VI (Changing Social Conditions), Chap. VII (Growth of Self-Government), and Chap. XI (End of the Middle Ages). Trevelyan's *History of England* (pp. 173–266) is vivid and good ; Green's *Short History* (pp. 132–301) is very stimulating. On social history, the *Piers Plowman Histories* (Part II, by R. H. Snape, Part III, by N. Niemeyer) are useful. For a selection of original materials see Keatinge and Fraser's *Documents of British History* (1216—1485). For constitutional history, the first two sections of Maitland's *English Constitutional History* (English Public Law at the death of Edward I, pp. 1–164 ; and English Public Law at the death of Henry VII, pp. 165–236), are altogether admirable. Barnard's *Companion to Mediæval History* is useful

on special points. Miss Bateson's *Mediæval England* (Story of the Nations) is very good on certain aspects. For more advanced work, and for reference, use the two volumes of Longmans' *Political History*, by Tout (1216–1377), and Oman (1377–1485). For Wales, O. M. Edwards's book in The Story of the Nations; for Scotland, Andrew Lang's *History of Scotland;* for Ireland, Dunlop, *Ireland* (Oxford Press). On special points Rait's *Life in a Mediæval University* (Cambridge Manuals); Jessopp, *The Coming of the Friars;* Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Fourteenth Century;* Oman, *Art of War in the Middle Ages*. The student who can find time to read (say) Jusserand or Jessopp will enjoy himself, and find that the age is made much more real to him. *Social England* (especially the illustrated edition) contains many useful short articles.

BOOK III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MODERN AGE

(1485–1603)

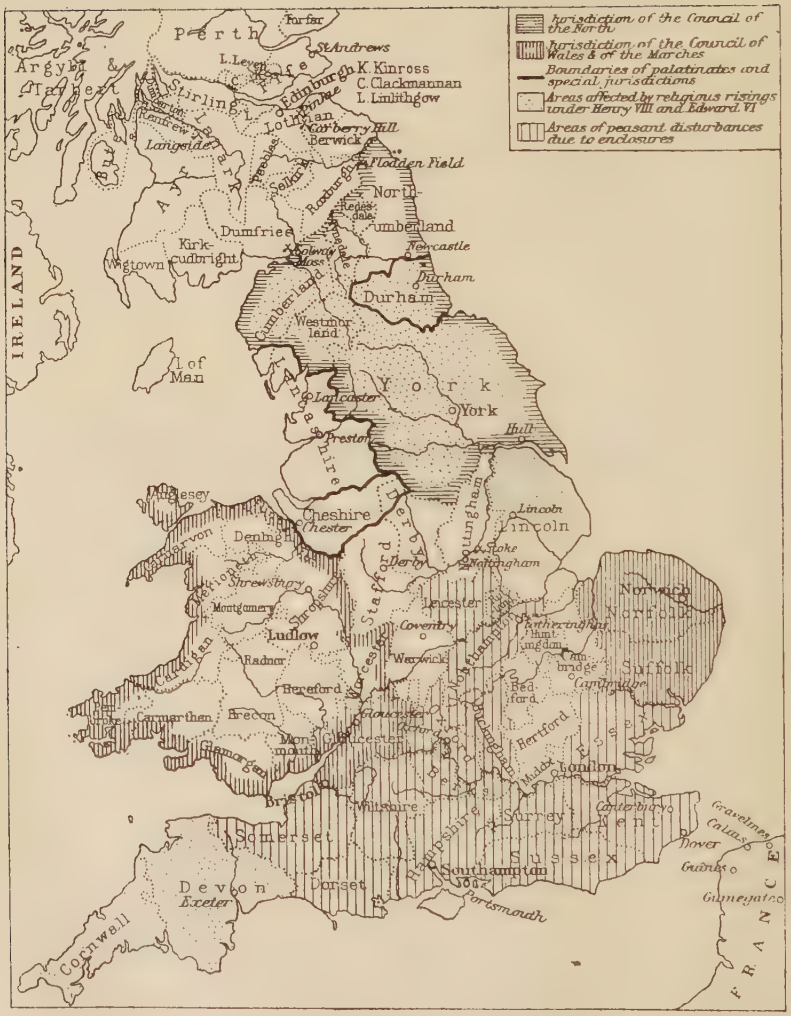

FIG. 16.—England and Wales under the Tudors.

BOOK III

THE BEGINNING OF THE MODERN AGE (1485–1603)

The Reformation and the Opening of the Seas

For the whole of Western civilisation, but more especially for the British peoples, the sixteenth century formed a bridge between the mediæval and the modern eras. It was a period of profound and rapid change. It saw the break-up of the religious unity of Latin Christendom ; it saw the emergence of powerful nation-states, and the beginning of acute rivalries between them ; it saw the enlargement of the stage of history by the great explorations, and an extension of European rivalries and of European civilisation into these new fields.

For the British peoples these changes were of momentous importance. They began the great age of British history, for which all the earlier centuries were an unconscious preparation. The long period of island-isolation was at an end. Henceforward the actions, character, and institutions of the British peoples played a vital part in moulding the destinies of the whole world. Three points of contrast will suffice to bring out the momentous importance of this century. In 1485 the islands were still a part of the great unity of Latin Christendom, presided over by the Pope : in 1603 England, Wales, and Scotland had become firmly Protestant, while Ireland was torn asunder by religious strife. In 1485 the four nations were still separate ; in 1603 they were all united under a single crown, and in the meantime Wales had been incorporated in England, Ireland had been subjugated, and Scotland had, after three centuries of war, been brought into friendly partnership with her greater neighbour. In 1485 the islands still lay, as they had always lain, on the very out-

skirts of the known world ; in 1603 they were already in the centre of the new streams of traffic that were crossing the oceans, and they were about to send forth the first of those oversea settlements which have been among their most remarkable achievements.

It was a very fortunate thing that, at this critical juncture, the throne of England should have fallen to a family of outstanding ability. The Tudor dynasty lasted for only three generations, covering five reigns ; but two of the five Tudor sovereigns were among the greatest of English rulers.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RESTORATION OF GOOD GOVERNMENT (1485–1529)

1. Henry VII and the Tudor System of Government (1485–1509)

Henry VII.—The reign of Henry VII * was a period of endings and beginnings. It was his prosaic but necessary work to stamp out the last embers of civil war, and to restore order and firm government. He was the founder of the highly efficient system of administration which carried England successfully through the critical times of the sixteenth century. His reign saw also the beginning, for England, of two momentous events which were profoundly to affect her development—the Renascence, and the great geographical discoveries.

Plots and Impostures.—It was not until the end of the century that the groundswell which followed the storm of the Wars of the Roses died down. There was a general turbulence, a readiness to resort to violence, which had to be overcome. It was not limited to the nobles and their retainers. As late as 1497 there was a rising in Cornwall against the imposition of taxes, and the Cornishmen marched to Blackheath before they were dispersed. Moreover, the irreconcilable Yorkists long remained restive, and Edward IV's sister Margaret, dowager Duchess of Burgundy, was always ready

* There is a Life of Henry VII, by James Gairdner (Twelve English Statesmen). Bacon's *History of Henry VII* is the earliest piece of scientific historical writing in English. Bishop Stubbs has a good essay on Henry VII.

to help them. Six months after his coronation, Henry VII married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV, and thus merged the Lancastrian and Yorkist lines. But this was not enough. He had to keep the young Earl of Warwick * (son of the Duke of Clarence and heir of the Kingmaker) in the Tower of London, where the poor lad remained until in 1499 he was executed on a trumped-up charge of treason. Even so, Henry had serious trouble for a number of years. In 1486 Lord Lovel (a crony of Richard III's) tried to kidnap the king; and, this failing, he and other Yorkists, backed by Margaret of Burgundy, produced an impostor—Lambert Simnel, the son of an Oxford craftsman—who pretended to be the Earl of Warwick. Troops were raised in Ireland, where the Yorkists had always been strong; mercenaries were hired in Germany; and a pitched battle had to be fought at *Stoke* (1487) before this menace was overcome. Some years later (1492) another impostor, a good-looking and clever young Fleming named Perkin Warbeck, claimed to be Richard of York, the younger of the two princes who had been murdered in the Tower. For five years the enterprising Perkin was in the offing: in Ireland, in the Netherlands, at the court of Scotland—everywhere welcomed by the enemies of the new dynasty, but never able to make a serious attack. In 1497 he landed in Cornwall, hoping to profit by the Cornish Rising. He was captured, thrown into the Tower, and (after two plucky attempts to escape) executed with Edward of Warwick in 1499. This was the end of dynastic troubles—just a hundred years after they were begun by the murder of Richard II in 1399.

Livery and Maintenance.—The slaughters and attainders of the last thirty years had greatly reduced the strength of the nobility: only twenty-seven barons, including only six earls, were summoned to Henry VII's first Parliament, as compared with fifty-three in 1454, and about one hundred in the time of Edward III. Nevertheless the "over-mighty subject" with his retainers was still a danger. In 1487 Henry added another to the numerous Acts forbidding the practices of "Livery and Maintenance," which had been the chief cause of disorder.† It was the last Act of the kind that was necessary; because Henry gave the execution of it to a powerful committee of the Privy Council, outside of and above the ordinary machinery of law.

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

† See above, pp. 129-30.

The Act was very stringently enforced ; Henry even fined his most loyal supporter, the Earl of Oxford, when he turned out an array of liveried retainers to greet his king ; and in a short time the nuisance which had prevented the orderly working of law and justice had disappeared. This work was done by the Court of Star Chamber, the first of a series of "prerogative courts" developed by the Tudors which wielded great authority independently of the common law. In time these "prerogative courts" became a danger, and they were all abolished by the Long Parliament in 1641. At this period they were necessary and welcome. Under their protection the ordinary machinery of the courts was able to work smoothly and without fear.

Privy Council and Justices.—This is an example of the way in which Henry and his successors used the Privy Council as a means of supervising and tightening up the whole system of government. The Privy Council was no longer the battle-ground of contending factions ; it was a body of industrious officials, shrewdly selected by the king himself ; and it was the essential pivot of the whole Tudor system. Its local agents were the Justices of the Peace in every county ; for the Sheriff and his shire-court had now fallen into abeyance. Through the Justices all the edicts of government were carried into effect. Their functions and numbers were steadily increased as the century wore on. They became the "men-of-all-work" of the Tudor government. The litany of the Church of England still prays for "the Lords of the Council and the magistrates" as the real authorities of government, though both have long since fallen from their high estate.

"The Tudor Despotism."—As Henry VII and his successors worked through and depended upon the country gentlemen, and had no class of salaried officials such as continental kings employed, their power, however great, could never be merely despotic. They had to feel the pulse of the country, and they had the means of doing so. Moreover, this system was training the country gentlemen in the business of government. They took to sending their sons to get some training in law at the Inns of Court ; and thus the two great classes of lawyers and country gentlemen, who were, in the next century, to bridle the power of the king and restore the supremacy of Parliament on a workable basis, were brought into alliance. It is a misnomer to speak of "the Tudor despotism." A system, such as that which Henry VII built up, wherein the king had no standing army to enforce his will, but depended upon the loyalty of an armed

nation, and wherein he had no local paid representatives, but depended for the execution of his commands upon the co-operation of the natural leaders of local society, was anything but a despotism. The Tudor kings were very nearly autocrats. But their autocracy depended upon their efficiency, and upon the willing assent of the nation, which was weary of factions.

Reduced Power of Parliament.—Parliament, with a depleted House of Lords, and a House of Commons that was manned by country gentlemen, lawyers, and merchants, all eager to co-operate with the king in restoring order and prosperity, sank into the background, and no longer dreamt of exercising the supremacy which it had formerly wielded—a supremacy which had been the cover for anarchy. This did not mean that it was swept aside. Its assent was still needed for new laws and for taxes, and neither Henry VII nor his successors attempted to disregard these powers. During the troubles of his first fourteen years, Henry VII had to summon Parliament frequently. During his last ten peaceful years it had only three short sessions. The long and almost annual sessions of the period 1330–1450 were no longer needed, and nobody regretted them.

The King's Revenues.—The main reason for this was that there was no longer any need for large grants of taxation. Thanks to the confiscations of the last half-century, the king could again "live of his own," except in emergencies, which was what his people wanted him to do. He had the revenues of his huge estates, now vastly increased by confiscations; he had the yield of the customs, which were voted to him for life, and which increased as trade grew; he had the profitable dues of the feudal system, and his agents (especially the lawyer-Councillors Empson and Dudley) used these and other excuses for extortion with the utmost skill. Finally, he could and did exact "benevolences," or forced gifts from rich men; his Chancellor, Archbishop Morton, was very skilful in exploiting this device. It had been freely used by Edward IV, and was strictly illegal, having been prohibited by a Statute of Richard III when he was trying to win popularity. Thanks to these devices, Henry VII was able, after his first troubled years, not only to "live of his own," but to leave a colossal hoard, estimated at £4½ millions, to his magnificent son. Henry VII was never a popular or attractive king: he was prudent, cautious, cold-blooded, avaricious, and he could be pitiless to those who were dangerous to him, like the hapless Warwick,

though he was lenient with the rank and file of rebels. But he laid very solidly the foundations of Tudor power, and restored to the country the priceless boons of peace, order, and firm government.

Relations with Scotland and Ireland.—All his thrift would have been of little avail if he had been tempted to adopt a "spirited foreign policy"; but this he left to his son. He had some threat of trouble from *Scotland*, which supported Perkin Warbeck, and he had to send an army northward to ward off a threat of invasion. But this came to nothing; and in 1502 he made friends with James IV of Scotland, and gave him his daughter Margaret in marriage.* This was a vitally important marriage: just a hundred years later it had its fruit in the union of the crowns. He might have been tempted to undertake the costly business of establishing the royal authority in distracted *Ireland*, but he preferred to leave the government in the hands of the leading Irish nobles. In 1494, indeed, he sent across one of his Privy Councillors, Sir Edward Poynings; but without money and a big army Poynings could do little. The only result of his visit was that the Irish Parliament passed *Poynings' Acts*, the most important of which provided that no Act of the Irish Parliament should be valid unless it had previously been approved by the English Privy Council. The immediate object of this was to prevent the Irish nobles from using the Irish Parliament as the English nobles had used the English Parliament; but it was to have other and very unhappy effects later.

Foreign Relations.—In foreign politics Henry might have been, and indeed was, tempted to revive the old vicious enmity with France. The French monarchy had now become very powerful, having been consolidated by the cunning of Louis XI.† In 1491 Charles VIII of France married Anne of Brittany, and thus absorbed the last great independent feudatory State. Henry VII was alarmed, and in accordance with the bad old tradition, led an army into Brittany. But he allowed himself to be bought off by the Treaty of Etaples (1492), thus making even a French war pay. His hereditary fear of France, however, still survived; and when, in 1494, Charles VIII invaded Italy to claim the throne of Naples, and found himself resisted by Spain, now unified under Ferdinand and Isabella,‡ Henry made friends with Spain, and sealed the friendship

* See Genealogical Tables B and D, at the end of the volume.

† See the larger Atlas, Plate 36.

‡ See the map of Spain, School Atlas, Plate 26*a*.

by getting the Spanish sovereign's daughter Katherine as a bride for his son Arthur (1501) : when Arthur died (1502), a papal dispensation was obtained to transfer the bride to his brother Henry—another momentous marriage alliance. The war between France and Spain in Italy was the beginning of the modern rivalry between nation-states. But this aspect of it was not obvious to Henry VII. He still looked at these matters from the mediæval point of view.

Encouragement of Trade.—One last feature of Henry's foreign policy deserves note. In 1496 he concluded with the Emperor Maximilian (who had married Charles of Burgundy's heiress and was ruling the Netherlands on behalf of their son Philip) a commercial treaty, known as the *Magnus Intercursus*, which established the utmost freedom of trade between England and the Netherlands. Ten years later he extorted from Philip a still more favourable treaty, which the Flemings called the *Malus Intercursus* because it gave such advantages to the English traders. This is an illustration of Henry VII's keen and intelligent interest in the development of English trade and shipping. The growth of English shipping owed much to him. He passed a new *Navigation Act* requiring that English goods should be carried in English ships ; and, stingy as he was, he gave substantial subsidies to encourage the building of big ships suitable for long voyages. Thus his reign was a time of preparation for that career upon the seas upon which the English were to enter under his successors. They were making ready to utilise the superb opportunities which were already opening.

2. The Great Geographical Discoveries

The First Discoveries.—While Henry VII was struggling with his difficulties, a series of explorations had suddenly multiplied the area of the world, and opened new horizons.* The Portuguese had long been creeping down the coast of Africa. In 1487, two years after Bosworth Field, Bartholomew Diaz rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and the sea-road to India was open. In 1492, when Perkin Warbeck was beginning his adventures, Columbus, pursuing his notion of a westward route to India, hit upon a new world without

* See School Atlas, Plate 42*a*.

knowing it, and in two later voyages planted the flag of Spain in the greater West Indian islands. In 1497, when the Cornishmen were marching to Blackheath, Vasco da Gama made his way to India, and the fabled wealth of the East began to pour into Lisbon. The imagination of Europe was fired by these discoveries. Even the cautious Henry VII was interested, and subscribed to the cost of equipping a modest expedition which set sail from Bristol under two Venetian sailors settled in that city, John and Sebastian Cabot. The Cabots were (though they knew it not) the first since the forgotten Norsemen to touch upon the North American continent. They roughly followed the coast from Greenland to Virginia—a vast region almost all of which was later to be English. But for the moment nothing came of this enterprise.

The Activity of Spain and Portugal.—It was to Spain and Portugal that the task of pursuing these beginnings fell—Spain to the West, Portugal to the East ; and in 1493 the Pope, still recognised as the supreme arbiter, divided the outer world between them by drawing an imaginary line southwards through the Atlantic from the Azores, which was in the next year modified by a treaty between the two Powers. In the next thirty years exploration was pushed forward with an amazing energy. The Portuguese built up a great maritime empire in the East, and obtained a monopoly of that lucrative traffic under Albuquerque (1509–1515) ; while in the West they found and claimed Brazil (1500). Sailors in the service of Spain mapped out the new world : Amerigo Vespucci (1502) showed the greatness of South America ; Balboa crossed the Isthmus of Panama and found the Pacific (1513) ; Cortez found Mexico and its mineral wealth (1519) ; Magellan, most daring of them all, circumnavigated the world (1519–1522). Before the period covered by this chapter came to an end, Spain had begun to draw from these new lands a stream of wealth which threatened to ensure her predominance in European affairs.

These events are not, directly, a part of the history of the British peoples, who played so small a part in them. But for their future, these discoveries were immeasurably more momentous than all the petty rebellions and dynastic impostures. They changed men's outlook, they transformed the scale and character of human affairs, they revealed the gigantic new arena upon which the drama of the future was to be played.

3. The Renascence Reaches England

Meaning of the Renascence.—Even more important than the discoveries, as a sign of the coming of a new era, was the Renascence, which first began seriously to affect the life and thought of England in the time of Henry VII. The Renascence is often called the "Revival of Learning," and the name conveys a suggestion that its essence was a deeper knowledge of the classics, and especially of Greek. If that were all, this great movement would not deserve the place which it holds as one of the turning-points in the history of human life and thought. The Greek as well as the Latin classics had been known and studied in the Middle Ages, but they had been studied in the light of the preconceived ideas of that period. Now, when mediævalism was decaying, the classics were studied from a different angle. Men realised that in the ancient world there had been a great and very noble civilisation, far surpassing that of mediæval Europe, which had *not* accepted the fundamental ideas of mediævalism. Instead of submissively accepting authority, as the mediæval mind had done, the ancient world had been extraordinarily bold and free in criticism and discussion. Instead of regarding human nature as inherently vile, distrusting human reason, and thinking of the body as essentially evil, the ancient world had gloried in the power of man, exalted human reason, and admired and cultivated physical beauty. Instead of taking self-repression as its ideal, the ancient world had taken self-expression as its ideal. This revelation led to an undermining of traditional authority, a new freedom in criticism, and a new boldness of thought. In some cases it led, through the undermining of accepted restraints, to a strange moral laxity; and in the political sphere the age of the Renascence was a time of amazing unscrupulousness. But the essence of the Renascence, and what makes it so important in human history, is the free criticism, the testing of accepted traditional ideas, to which it led.

The English Renascence.—There had been some men in fifteenth-century England who were influenced by the new current of ideas, such as Humphrey Duke of Gloucester and Tiptoft Earl of Worcester. But it was in Henry VII's reign that the movement took root in England, and established itself in the Universities—notably in Oxford.* Grocyn and Linacre, coming back from Italy,

* Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers* is a good little book on this subject.

began to teach Greek literature in the modern way, and scientific medicine, at Oxford. A greater than these, John Colet, came from Italy to Oxford in 1497, and lectured on the Epistles of St. Paul—trying to get behind traditional ideas, and to explain what the Apostle's mind was like, and what his letters meant to those who received them. In Oxford, too, the gentle and learned Erasmus—the greatest scholar of his time, and the first to whom the printing-press gave a European fame—found for a time a congenial home. And Colet and Erasmus made a friend of the noble and lovable Sir Thomas More,* who applied the new spirit of free criticism to the sphere of politics, and in *Utopia* (Nowhere), published in 1516, drew a picture of an ideal society (which he placed in the unexplored New World) wherein property was fairly diffused, everybody was educated, there were no oppressed poor and no cruel masters, and every man might worship God as he thought best. † There was a marked contrast between the leaders of the Renascence in the north—in England, Germany, and the Netherlands—and its leaders in Italy. In Italy they mostly took no interest in theology, brushing it aside as part of the superstition of the dying age, while in politics thinkers such as Machiavelli (whose famous book *The Prince* was published in 1509) did not dream dreams of an ideal state, but studied very practically the methods of war and treachery whereby a prince could acquire and maintain power for himself. But in the north criticism was mainly directed against the corruptions and superstitions of the Church, and the cruelties and stupidities of the State. Hence in the north, though not in Italy, the Renascence helped to prepare the way for the Reformation.

Renascence Culture. — The Renascence had an extraordinarily stimulating effect upon schools and universities, and upon the whole tone of society. Colet, who became Dean of St. Paul's, founded St. Paul's School as a model of new educational methods; and its influence rapidly extended to the older foundations. New colleges were started in Oxford and Cambridge, no longer organised on the monastic model. In the upper classes it became fashionable to be cultivated. The court of the young king Henry VIII had as many scholars and thinkers as a university; and even girls, like Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth, shared in the new knowledge

* More's son-in-law, Roper, wrote a beautiful little Life of him.

† *Utopia* is still worth reading. It is quite short, and there are many cheap editions of it: one is in Everyman's Library.

and the new outlook. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance to a nation's life of such a movement as this, which prepared the way for the glorious efflorescence of poetry that came in the last quarter of the century. The age in which new regions of the earth, and new realms of the spirit, were simultaneously being revealed as if by the sudden rending of a curtain, was indeed an age of great beginnings : "bliss was it in that dawn to be alive."

4. Henry VIII and Wolsey (1509–1527)

Henry VIII.—The gallant and splendid young prince who succeeded to the throne in 1509, at the age of eighteen, was himself an expression of the Renascence spirit.* Handsome and well-built, he was an adept in all manly sports. He was also highly cultivated, a scholar, a poet, and a musician ; and he liked to surround himself with men of intellect. He loved pleasure, but never neglected his work ; he knew how to choose and use men of ability, and was himself able enough not to be afraid of them—the ablest among them always knew he was the master. From the first he was popular among his subjects, and even in the dark days at the end of his reign he never lost his popularity. For he had an easy and pleasant address, while he never permitted a liberty or forgot that he was king ; and, being himself thoroughly English, he had an instinctive understanding of the English temper, which he never lost. He had a high spirit and a domineering temper, but this seemed natural in so splendid a person. In his later years he was to become a pitiless and blood-thirsty tyrant. Even in his gallant youth the vein of ruthless selfishness which was his greatest fault displayed itself, though it was obscured by his frank and gallant bearing. Almost his first act was to sacrifice his father's tools, Empson and Dudley, in order to win popularity. They were condemned to death for high treason by an Act of Attainder—an utterly unjust sentence ; and both this cruel sacrifice of his father's faithful servants for his own momentary advantage, and the use of the high-handed method of attainder (which denied any semblance of trial) were ominous indications of what was to come.

War with France and Scotland.—When he succeeded to a unified and prosperous kingdom and to a vast accumulation of wealth, his first desire was to cut a figure in European politics, which were

* There is a good short life of Henry VIII by A. F. Pollard.

now becoming interesting and exciting. The rivalry of the great nations had begun, and Henry VIII wanted to play a masterful part in it. Since 1494 France and Spain had been fighting for dominance in Italy, which had come to be the symbol of leadership in Europe, completely disregarding the fact that in the process they were ruining the brilliant civilisation of Italy.* When Henry came to the throne they had for the moment joined forces, along with the Emperor Maximilian, to ruin the republic of Venice. But in 1510 this unnatural alliance broke down ; and in 1511 the warlike Pope Julius II formed a *Holy League* to drive the French out of Italy. Henry VIII eagerly joined this League, hoping not only to play a part on the European stage, but to revive the tarnished glories of Edward III and Henry V. In 1512 and 1513 he sent an army to the south of France to co-operate with Ferdinand of Aragon and to reconquer Guienne : it achieved nothing at all. In 1513 he himself invaded northern France from Calais, defeated the French at *Guinegate* (Battle of the Spurs), and took the towns of Tournai and Therouanne.

Flodden Field.—This was like a renewal of the old mediæval wars. And quite in the mediæval fashion, it was accompanied by a Scottish invasion of the north, led by James IV. The Scottish army was defeated with terrible losses at *Flodden* (1513)—the most dreadful disaster that had ever fallen upon Scotland, in which the king himself and most of his nobles were cut down like " the flowers of the forest." † But there was no advantage to be derived from these adventures : they only revived ancient and ruinous enmities. Realising that his allies of the Holy League were merely using him as a catspaw, Henry withdrew in disgust, and made peace with both France and Scotland —giving his sister Mary in marriage to Louis XII (1514). Next year, Louis XII died, and Mary married her old lover, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk : their granddaughter was Lady Jane Grey.‡

Rise of Wolsey.—During these first campaigns, which had merely emptied his treasury, Henry found a very capable administrator in a priest, Thomas Wolsey, § who had been introduced to

* For this period see the map of Italy, School Atlas, Plate 25*c*.

† This is the theme of Scott's spirited poetic romance, *Marmion*.

‡ See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

§ There is a good short Life of Wolsey by Bishop Creighton (Twelve English Statesmen).

him by his father's chancellor, Bishop Foxe. Wolsey, the son of a Suffolk grazier, was a man of immense capacity and of unbounded ambition. Henry enriched and promoted him with great rapidity. In 1515 he became Archbishop of York, Chancellor, and a Cardinal; he also held the revenues of three other bishoprics and several abbacies, which made him the richest man in the kingdom. Henceforth Wolsey was, for fourteen years, the mainspring of the government of England, and he proved himself an administrator of immense ability. He impartially neglected the duties of his many ecclesiastical offices, devoting all his energy to government, and living in almost royal state: he built for himself the palace of Hampton Court. The splendour and power of the great minister matched the splendour and power of his master. Like Henry, Wolsey was a characteristic product of the Renascence. Amid his multifarious activities, he found time to take a genuine interest in the progress of learning, and if business had been less exacting he might have done something to reform the Church. He was the founder of the most magnificent of the Oxford colleges, Christ Church, which he called Cardinal College; he also planned a great school at his native Ipswich; and he found the funds for these institutions by suppressing some of the smaller monasteries—an example which his master was to follow on a large scale.

Charles V and Francis I.—A man of grandiose mind and vaulting ambition, Wolsey dreamed of becoming Pope; and this affected his policy. Like his master, he was primarily interested in the big game of international politics, which had become doubly interesting at the moment when he took control of English policy.* A vast power, such as Europe had not seen since the days of Charlemagne, threatened to dominate Europe—the power of the House of Habsburg, built up by a series of lucky marriages.† Since 1506, the young prince Charles of Habsburg had been master of the Netherlands, which he inherited from his grandmother, Mary of Burgundy. In 1516 he succeeded to the now united monarchy of Spain, as heir of his grandfather Ferdinand of Aragon and his grandmother Isabella of Castile; and with Spain went the kingdom of Naples and Sicily (the southern half of Italy), and the immense empire of the New World, whose wealth was only beginning to be revealed. Finally,

* See School Atlas, Plate 15.

† For these marriages, and the other important dynastic marriages of this period, see Genealogical Table E, at the end of the volume.

in 1519, on the death of his other grandfather, the Emperor Maximilian, Charles also inherited the Austrian lands of the Habsburgs. If, in addition to all this, he were to be elected to his grandfather's titles of King of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor, his power might enable him to become more really master of Germany than any emperor had been since the thirteenth century. He would dominate Europe; and, in particular, he would threaten France, the only power capable of resistance, from the north, the

FIG. 17.—The Dominions of Charles V.

east and the south. Francis I of France tried to prevent this by becoming a candidate for the imperial throne; Henry VIII also sought election, and squandered much money in trying to buy votes. But Charles was elected, and the possibility of a single power dominating all Europe loomed ahead. Time was to show that this gigantic empire was less formidable than it seemed, because there was no unity in its various parts, all of which were jealous of their master. Indeed, in 1521, Charles had to hand over his Austrian lands to his brother Ferdinand, who later (1526) succeeded to Bohemia and

Hungary ; and there were henceforward two branches of the Habsburg house. But this did not seriously diminish the menace to France ; and for two centuries to come the enmity between France and the House of Habsburg was the governing fact in European politics. In the near future it was to make the survival of Protestantism possible.

Henry and the Rivals.—What attitude was England to adopt in regard to this formidable rivalry ? Both sides wanted her friendship, and Wolsey thought that she might make her profit by playing the one off against the other. In 1520 Henry VIII met Francis I amid the lavish splendours of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, near Calais, and there was much talk of an alliance. But shortly afterwards Henry met Charles V quietly at Gravelines, and came to an understanding with him : the traditional enmity to France, and the traditional desire to be on good terms with the lord of Flanders, were too strong to make a French alliance possible. When the inevitable war between France and Spain began in 1521, Henry twice invaded France ; but his expeditions had no definite results.

Balance of Power.—In 1525 Charles inflicted a crushing defeat upon Francis at *Pavia*, and took him captive. This promised to give Charles so complete a preponderance that Wolsey and Henry reversed their policy, and made peace with France. But they did nothing to help her actively. After four more years of fighting, peace was made between the rivals at Cambrai (1529)—mainly because Charles wanted to be free to deal with the Reformation in Germany and with the menace of the Turks, who had conquered most of Hungary. He had not crushed France ; but it was not England who had saved her, and he had made himself master of Italy and reduced the Pope to dependence upon himself. The Habsburg power seemed to be more formidable than ever. The reversal of English policy in 1525 has often been acclaimed as a proof of the greatness of Wolsey, and as the beginning of the policy of "balance of power," with which England was in the future to be identified. This claim is put too high. In reality Henry and Wolsey counted for almost nothing in this bitter rivalry. The most that can be said for their policy is that it marks an abandonment of the mediæval ambition of conquering territory in France.

Henry VIII and Parliament.—The main result of this pretentious but ineffectual foreign policy, and of the lavishness of Henry's court, was that the brimming treasury which Henry VII

had left was emptied, and it became once more necessary to demand grants from Parliament. But Parliament was by no means submissive. In 1522 and 1523, when large grants were demanded for the French war, it was very restive ; Wolsey had to go down to the House of Commons in state to browbeat it. After this experience, Parliament was not again summoned during Wolsey's tenure of power. He fell back upon the system of " benevolences," demanding in 1525 an " amicable loan " of one-sixth of every man's income. But this raised a storm ; there was even a threat of rebellion. In the matter of taxation, at any rate, Parliament was by no means submissive, even under Henry VIII, though it did not presume to meddle with questions of national policy.

CHAPTER XIV

HENRY VIII AND THE REFORMATION (1529–1547)

While Henry and Wolsey were busy with their futile efforts to play an active part in European politics, the tremendous religious revolution which is known as the Reformation had begun. Starting in Germany and Switzerland, it was already well under way, and was beginning to influence England, when Wolsey's tenure of power came to an end in 1529.

1. The Causes of the Reformation

Sources of Discontent.—Dissatisfaction with the condition of the Church had long been growing, in England as in every other European country ; the Church had become worldly and corrupt, and the most earnest and orthodox of churchmen were the most eager for reform, though not for disruption. The dissatisfaction was of three kinds. (1) There was keen resentment against the enormous powers claimed by the Papacy, and the way in which these powers were used to exact money and to draw cases to the papal courts at Rome. This resentment had been intensified by the shameful schism of the fifteenth century, when rival Popes were engaged in cursing one another, and by the character of such Popes as Alexander Borgia : the Popes of this period were, in fact, merely Italian princes

using their spiritual powers for their temporal advantage. It was in the strong national States that this resentment was most effective. It had been expressed by the English Parliament in many Statutes, such as Provisors and Præmunire, from Edward III's time onwards. (2) There was resentment against the wealth and luxury of the greater clergy, and against the idleness and greed of many of the monks and friars, who no longer rendered the great religious and educational services which they had once given. More than one-quarter of the land of England was in clerical hands. And the exemption which the clergy claimed from public obligations and from the supremacy of the ordinary laws added to the resentment. This had been expressed, time and again, both by kings and parliaments from Edward I onwards, and by a long succession of satirists. (3) Finally there was a good deal of dissatisfaction with the teachings of the Church, which were encrusted with many superstitions that had grown up during the Middle Ages, and were out of accord with the spirit of the New Learning. This affected scholars, at first, rather than ordinary men, and the scholars did not want violent action. But the ordinary man also was capable of being aroused to an intense interest in theological questions, as the popularity of Wycliffe's teaching had long ago shown. And Lollardy had not altogether died out ; it still flourished obscurely here and there, and there were burnings for heresy at intervals during the reign of Henry VII and the early reign of Henry VIII. Moreover, as events were soon to show, it was difficult to attack the political abuses of the Church without attacking also its doctrines.

The Lutheran Movement.—Thus a great part of Europe, including England, was full of explosives only waiting for a spark. The spark came from Martin Luther, a friar-professor of Wittenberg in Saxony, who in 1517 nailed to the door of the church there a number of *Theses* challenging the right of the Pope to sell indulgences, or exemptions from penance. A fierce controversy arose, which was swiftly spread by the new invention of the printing-press. Luther was led on to challenge the general authority of the Papacy, and many of the doctrines of the Church ; and his ideas spread like fire in the heather. In 1521 Charles V was unable to stamp out the rising conflagration at the Diet of Worms ; because many of the German princes favoured the new ideas. They saw that the overthrow of papal authority would strengthen their power, and that they could enrich themselves by the plunder of the Church. And this prospect

proved, as time went on, to be attractive to many princes—not excluding Henry VIII. At first, indeed, Henry was fervently orthodox. Proud of his theological learning, he published in 1521 a reply to Luther, for which the Pope rewarded him with the title *Fidei Defensor :* the letters F.D. still appear on British coins. But the new ideas went on growing, and threw all western Europe into a ferment. They began to spread to England, though not yet on any large scale—chiefly in the prosperous eastern counties and in London. In 1525 William Tyndale published a translation of the New Testament in English. He was banished, and subsequently burnt in the Netherlands. There was also an increase in the number of burnings for heresy. But it was not by the spreading of Lutheran ideas that England was to be drawn into the Reformation ; but by the angry action of her wilful king.

2. The Severance from Rome (1527–1534)

The Divorce Question.—Henry VIII had become tired of his wife Katherine of Aragon : she was a melancholy, ailing woman, older than himself ; she had given him no son ; and he had fallen in love with Anne Boleyn, a sprightly maid of honour, niece of the Duke of Norfolk. Henry ordered Wolsey (1527) to obtain a divorce from the Pope, on the ground that his marriage with his brother's widow had been invalid from the first, in spite of the papal dispensation. But the Pope, Clement VII, was obstinate. Even if he had been willing, it would have been difficult for him to do what Henry wanted ; for he was at that moment at the mercy of Charles V, Katherine's nephew. The most he would do was to issue a commission to try the case to two cardinals, Wolsey and an Italian, Campeggio. Campeggio deliberately loitered ; and before the court could decide, the Pope cancelled its commission and gave his verdict against the king (1529). Two years had been lost.

Fall of Wolsey.—The masterful king's ire turned against Wolsey. The Chancellor had just been levying severe "benevolences," having been refused by Parliament the swingeing taxes for which he asked ; and he was at the height of his unpopularity. Henry announced that Wolsey had acted without his consent, and deprived him of the Chancellorship. Then, on the ground that he had broken the Act of Præmunire by acting as papal legate, all his property was confiscated, and he was sent off to perform the neglected

duties of his archbishopric. Next year he was ordered to come to London to answer to a monstrous charge of treason; but the ruined and broken-hearted man died on the way, an exemplar of the ingratitude of princes and of the sudden fall of overweening pride (1530).*

The Long Parliament of the Reformation.—Henry now set himself to find ways of bringing pressure to bear upon the Pope. A Cambridge divine, Thomas Cranmer † (who was already veering towards the Protestant view) suggested to him that he should get opinions in his favour from the canon-lawyers of the Universities. The experiment was tried, but came to nothing. Nevertheless Henry took Cranmer into high favour, and in 1533 made him Archbishop of Canterbury. But the main device was to frighten the Pope by letting loose against him the English Parliament, which was full of anti-papal feeling. For this purpose a parliament was summoned in 1529. It was so satisfactory that it was carried on from year to year until 1536, whereas previously there had been a new election for every session. It is known as the Long Parliament of the Reformation, and it carried out a revolution quite as momentous as that which was achieved by its namesake a century later. It was by no means a blind instrument of the king's will. It knew what it was doing, and needed careful handling. For this delicate work the king chose Thomas Cromwell, the son of a Putney blacksmith, who, after many adventures at home and abroad, had won prosperity as a solicitor and money-lender, and had been used by Wolsey for many purposes—especially to carry out the suppression of some of the monasteries in order to provide the means for the foundation of his Oxford College. Cromwell, like most clever people of his time, was a believer in absolute monarchy. The king found him a very valuable tool, astute, cool-headed, ruthless; and ere long he was high in the royal favour. Sir Thomas More was chosen as Chancellor; but that noble and upright man was ill-adapted for the work that had to be done, and in 1532 he resigned the seals. Three years later he died on the scaffold.

The Subjugation of the Clergy.—The attack upon the Pope and the Church was steadily and skilfully developed. Each

* Shakespeare has fixed upon these events as the most dramatic material for his *King Henry VIII.*

† There is a short Life of Cranmer by A. C. Deane.

year saw a new step. In 1529 certain profitable abuses of the Church were swept away. In 1530 the English clergy were terrorised by a prosecution under the Act of Præmunire, for having recognised Wolsey as legate. The penalty was confiscation of all their goods, but they were excused on payment of a fine of £118,000, and on condition that the king was recognised as "the sole protector and supreme head of the Church and clergy of England": they ruefully submitted, subject to the phrase "as far as the law of Christ allows." Next year Convocation was forced to accept a revision of the whole body of canon law, carried out by a commission appointed by the king; and, among other things, the ancient abuse of "benefit of clergy," for which Becket had died four centuries before, was swept away.

The Breach with Rome.—Having shown that the English clergy were incapable of resistance, the king and Parliament next made a more direct attack upon the Papacy. In 1532 the Annates Act abolished the heavy payments made by newly-appointed bishops to the Pope. Still the Pope would not yield. So in 1533 all appeals to Rome were forbidden, and, under cover of this Act, Cranmer as archbishop tried the great divorce case, and declared that Henry's marriage to Katherine had been invalid from the beginning. Henry had already secretly married Anne Boleyn, and in 1533 she was crowned, and gave birth to a daughter—Elizabeth. The breach with Rome was now final. This was definitely recognised by the *Act of Supremacy*, 1534, which declared that the king "justly and rightfully is and ought to be supreme head of the Church of England." In the same year another Act provided that bishops should be chosen by cathedral chapters, but that the chapters should be bound to choose the men nominated by the king: this is the method by which bishops of the Church of England are still appointed. The Pope inevitably replied to the Act of Supremacy by excommunicating Henry and declaring him deposed. Henceforth there was war to the knife between England and Rome.

Political Effects of the Breach.—Thus was completed the first stage of the Reformation—the complete severance of the English Church from Rome, and the substitution of the king's authority for that of the Pope. As yet, however, the change was purely political: no change had been made either in the doctrine or in the ritual of the Church, and the ordinary man saw no difference in the services of his parish church. There is no doubt at all that

Parliament and the mass of the people readily concurred in the severance from Rome. Both the old dislike of the Papacy and the strong national feeling of England found satisfaction in this change. Nevertheless the change was a revolution. It made a breach with the history of the long centuries since the Synod of Whitby. And the revolution was almost as great in the political as in the ecclesiastical sphere. It increased immeasurably the power of the crown. Having added the authority of the Pope to that of the king, and having now absolutely under his control the whole organisation of the Church, which had hitherto been independent and had often been the mainstay of resistance to royal power, Henry was more nearly a despot than any of his predecessors. He was master of the consciences as well as of the bodies of his subjects. And this became very apparent in the next period.

3. Thomas Cromwell and the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1534–1540)

The Cromwellian Tyranny.—The half-dozen years from 1534 to 1540 were a period not merely of despotism but of tyranny. Death without any semblance of trial, by the convenient method of attainder, was the fate of all who opposed or even criticised the king. The instrument of this tyranny was Thomas Cromwell, who believed in despotism as the only efficient form of government, and had no scruples in clearing all obstacles out of the way, without any semblance of justice. The period opened with a series of judicial murders which horrified Europe. Fisher, the saintly and learned Bishop of Rochester; Thomas More, the noblest gentleman in England, who had been the king's own familiar friend; and a group of Carthusian monks eminent for their piety, suffered death (1535) by the axe or the rope for refusing to swear that the king's first marriage had always been invalid. They were willing to recognise Anne as queen; but this was not enough. Within a year (1536) Anne Boleyn, having incurred the king's distrust, was also beheaded; her daughter Elizabeth was declared illegitimate; and her marriage, for questioning which so much noble blood had been shed, was also declared to have been invalid from the beginning. Henry then married his third wife, Jane Seymour, who at last gave him a son (1537), afterwards Edward VI: her family was promptly raised

to an uneasy eminence, and her brother, created Earl of Hertford, became one of the leaders of the court.

Suppression of the Monasteries.—The main work of these years was the seizure of a large part of the property of the Church, by the suppression of the monasteries. As vicar-general for the royal Head of the Church, Cromwell carried out a visitation of the monasteries: he had learnt how to do the work when he was employed by Wolsey in a similar task. There is no doubt that the monasteries had largely outlived their usefulness, but it is impossible to accept the wholesale charges of corruption and vice which were made against them by Cromwell's commissioners. Nevertheless, on the basis of these charges, 375 lesser monasteries, with incomes of under £200 per annum, were dissolved at one fell swoop by an Act of Parliament —the final achievement of the Reformation Parliament (1536). All this immense property was transferred to the king. During the next three years the richer prey of the greater monasteries was also brought into the net. One by one they were bullied into surrendering their property; in some cases their abbots were hanged; and a new Parliament of 1539 legalised these transactions.*

The Distribution of the Plunder.—The suppression of the monasteries involved a far greater interference with the life of the nation than the breach with Rome. Whatever their defects, the monasteries had rendered many services, especially in the relief of the poor. The monks became homeless wanderers, adding to the number of vagabonds who formed one of the social problems of the period. Their great possessions passed into new hands. A small part of them was used to endow new bishoprics.† Another part was used to strengthen the navy and create coast-defences, against the possibility of foreign attack. Henry VIII had always taken a keen interest in the navy, and indeed may almost be described as its founder; for he had, as early as 1512, built great ships of a new pattern which were equipped in royal dockyards. He was the first English king who made it his policy to make England safe from invasion by means of a Royal Navy of fighting ships; and the plunder of the monasteries helped him to do this. But by far the greater part of the monastic lands passed, by royal grant or by sale at a low price, into the hands of lay owners. About a thousand men were thus enriched from the

* For the number of the monasteries and their distribution see School Atlas, Plate 35.

† These are shown in School Atlas, Plate 35.

plunder of the Church. From among them sprang a new nobility, far more dependent upon the crown than their predecessors, and deeply committed to the support of the Reformation, to which they owed their fortunes. Some of the greatest noble houses of modern England date their importance from this period. Moreover, the House of Lords underwent a great change as a result of the suppression. Hitherto the spiritual peers had formed a majority, and often a very independent majority. But now that the parliamentary abbots had all disappeared, and the bishops had become mere creatures of the crown, and the new lay nobles owed their fortunes to royal grants which might be reclaimed if the religious revolution were reversed, the House of Lords became a much more submissive body than it had been. In every way, the Reformation added to the power of the crown.

The Pilgrimage of Grace.—So great a transfer of land could not take place without a serious disturbance—especially as the new landlords were in many cases harsher than the old. For this reason the suppression of the monasteries led to open resistance (1536), as the severance from Rome had not done. There was a rising in Lincolnshire, while in Yorkshire a Pilgrimage of Grace, to beg the king to dismiss his evil counsellors, was organised under the lead of a young lawyer, Robert Aske : in these two counties the monasteries had been more numerous than elsewhere. The Yorkshire rising was so serious that a free pardon had to be promised to persuade the rebels to disperse. Then, on the pretext of a fresh disturbance, pitiless vengeance was taken.

Council of the North and Union of Wales.—This outbreak led to the establishment of a branch of the Privy Council at York, called the Council of the North, to maintain the royal authority in that disturbed region. It lasted for a century, and unquestionably did good work in establishing firm government in the turbulent north. A similar Council had previously (1534) been established at Ludlow for Wales and the Marches ; and it is from this time that we must date the ending of the turbulence which had for centuries marked these districts. The time had now come when the feudal independence of Wales might be brought to an end ; and it was the Welsh king, Henry VIII, who brought about, in 1536, the *Union of England and Wales*—the first of a long series of such unions in the history of the British peoples. Wales was divided into thirteen counties, each of which henceforward returned a member to the

united Parliament, while the boroughs in each county returned another member. Cruel as the despotism of Henry VIII could be, it was undoubtedly efficient, and it led to closer national unity.

Doctrinal Change.—Meanwhile the influence of the timid Cranmer, who was gradually becoming more Protestant, led to the first tentative steps towards doctrinal change. In 1537 a text-book of religion, known as the Bishops' Book, and drawn up by Cranmer, was issued: it leant towards Protestantism. And in 1538 a new translation of the Bible into English, based upon Tyndale's earlier work, was published, and a copy of this Great Bible, as it was called, was chained in every parish church for the use of the parishioners. Cromwell, though he cared not a jot about doctrine, was moving in the Protestant direction, because there was at this moment some fear of a combination of Charles V and Francis I against England; and, as a counterpoise, he was inclined to favour an alliance with the German princes. As a sign of this alliance he proposed to the king a marriage with Anne of Cleves, Jane Seymour having died soon after the birth of her son. Henry consented; but the "Flanders mare," as he politely called her, did not please his critical taste, and he promptly divorced her.

The Fall of Cromwell.—The movement towards Protestantism, slight as it was, was quickly stopped: the Defender of the Faith remained inflexibly orthodox. In 1539 a new Parliament, the most servile that has ever sat since Parliament was created, accepted from the royal theologian a definition of faith in *Six Articles*, and passed a ferocious Act imposing the penalties of forfeiture and death for writing or speaking against transubstantiation, celibacy of the clergy, auricular confession, and other distinctively Catholic doctrines. There never was a fiercer persecutor than Henry VIII: while this Parliament was sitting a man was burnt for eating meat on a Friday. It was in 1539, indeed, that the despotism of Henry VIII reached its culmination; for Cromwell succeeded in persuading this despicable Parliament to pass an Act giving to the king's *Proclamations* the force of law, and thus to abdicate its own legislative powers. Cromwell's task had been to establish absolute monarchy in England. His work was now done, and his master was tired of him; his only further use was to serve as a scapegoat for the unpopularity which his measures had brought. Attainted on an absurd charge of treason, he was sent by his ruthless master to the block to which he had sent so many better men.

4. The Last Years of Henry VIII (1540–1547)

The last seven years of Henry VIII were comparatively quiet, after the excitements of the previous period. There was a sort of balance in the Council between the friends of the New Learning, led by Cranmer and the Earl of Hertford, and the friends of the Old Learning, led by the Duke of Norfolk, by the Secretary of State (Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester), and by Bonner, Bishop of London. Cranmer was indeed allowed to publish an English Litany (1544), substantially in its modern form, and to issue (1545) forms of Morning and Evening Prayer in English: the grave beauty of the English Prayer-Book, of which these issues formed the first draft, is indeed his greatest work. But on all essential points of doctrine, the decision of the irresistible king remained inflexibly orthodox, as he showed when he chose for his fifth wife (1540) Catherine Howard, a niece of the Duke of Norfolk, leader of the party of the Old Learning; but her reign lasted only two years—she went to the block for infidelity in 1542. During all these last years there was impartial persecution for all who would not accept the king's religious system. Catholics went to the block for questioning the royal supremacy, Protestants for differing from the royal theology.

War with Scotland.—The main interest of the last years of Henry VIII lay in his foreign policy, which once more became active—and futile—after the interval of absorption in ecclesiastical affairs. In *Ireland* these years saw the beginning of a new policy; but this will be discussed elsewhere * as part of the grim story of the conquest of Ireland. In *Scotland* Henry's nephew, James V, after a long minority which followed his father's death at Flodden (1513), had been engaged in a fierce struggle with his turbulent nobles. As he depended on the support of the Church, he was no friend to Protestantism. The new teaching had already made its appearance in Scotland: the first Scottish Protestant martyr, Patrick Hamilton, was burnt in 1528; and thereafter Protestant preachers were never lacking. They were protected by some of the nobles, who were at enmity with both the crown and the Church. For this reason an English party was beginning to grow up in Scotland. In the long run it was common enmity to Rome which was to bring the two countries together, and with tact and patience Henry VIII might

* See below, p. 219.

have anticipated this result. But tact and patience were never qualities of the domineering tyrant. He ruined his chance by going to war with Scotland in 1542. His army was victorious at *Solway Moss*; and when, soon afterwards, James V died, leaving his throne to an infant girl, Mary Queen of Scots, and a weak regent, the Earl of Arran, Scotland seemed to lie at Henry's mercy. He succeeded in getting Arran's assent to an agreement that the young queen should marry the Prince of Wales when she reached her tenth year. But when the Scottish nobles, fearing English predominance, refused their assent, Henry lost patience. Once again the Lowlands were mercilessly ravaged. In 1544 Edinburgh was burnt; in 1545 five towns and 243 villages were destroyed, and the whole harvest of several counties was ruined. But the only effect of this was to destroy the English party, and to throw Scotland more than ever into dependence upon France. Thus Henry's Scottish policy was a disastrous failure.

War with France.—The war with France, which began in 1543, was partly a consequence of the Scottish war. But it was also due to the request of Charles V for an alliance, which Henry eagerly accepted. In spite of his immense resources, Charles was in continuous difficulties. He was on bad terms with the Pope, because of his power in Italy; he could not reduce the German Protestants to obedience; even in the Netherlands the Protestant movement was causing unrest; and there was a formidable menace from the Turks, who had overrun Hungary and threatened Vienna.* Everywhere Francis I of France was a thorn in his side, stirring up the German princes and even making an open alliance with the Turks. So Charles was glad to make an alliance with the heretic Henry, for a combined attack on France—promising, as the price of help, Normandy and Guienne. The war lasted three years. At sea Henry's navy established a complete ascendancy over the French, who had begun the war by attacking the English coasts and landing in the Isle of Wight. *Boulogne* was captured, and was left in English possession when the war ended (1546). This was the only tangible result of all Henry's costly foreign adventures.

Conditions at Henry's Death. — These wars, however, depleted the Treasury: they used up the plunder of the Church as the wars at the beginning of the reign had used up Henry VII's

* See School Atlas, Plates 15 and 26*c*.

hoard. To meet his immediate needs, Henry had recourse to the ruinous method of debasing the currency. There is no surer way of bringing about a dislocation of trade, and this folly caused infinite distress. Moreover, both social and religious unrest were brewing at home. It was a *damnosa hæreditas* which the tyrant left to his successor, when he died in January 1547. One last victim of his tyranny preceded him to the shades. The poet-earl of Surrey, son of the Duke of Norfolk, had been attainted and executed for high treason just before the king died; and if Henry's death had come a few days later, the Duke himself—who had been one of Henry's principal councillors since 1529—would have followed his son to the scaffold. Henry VIII was a detestable tyrant. But at least he was no weakling, and he has left an indelible mark on the history of his country.

CHAPTER XV

THE CRISIS OF THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND (1547–1560)

1. Calvinism and the Counter-Reformation

Growth of Religious Fervour.—There is a marked contrast, both in England and in Europe, between the first and the second phases of the Reformation. In the first phase, which lasted for about thirty years after Luther posted his Theses in 1517, and therefore roughly corresponded with the reign of Henry VIII, the cleavage between Catholic and Protestant was only slowly developing. The forces making for change were quite as much political as religious. Like Henry VIII, the princes of Germany and the kings of Sweden and Denmark adopted the new faith mainly as a means of increasing their own wealth and power; and on the Catholic side there was little fervour of resistance, because all good Catholics recognised the need for reform, and Catholic princes equally with Protestant princes were mainly influenced by political motives. But in the second phase there was an increasing sharpness of definition on both sides; the conflict became bitter, even fanatical; and even among ruling princes secular motives were qualified by the desire to secure victory for their accepted doctrines.

The Counter-Reformation.—On the Catholic side, a reforming movement began within the Church. Zealous and earnest Popes took the place of the worldly Popes of the earlier period; Catholic doctrine was more clearly defined by the great *Council of Trent*, which began its sittings in 1546, though its work was not completed until 1563; the *Inquisition* was set on foot to crush out heresy; the militant *Jesuit Order* was founded (1540). The Catholic Revival, or Counter-Reformation, had begun; and soon great political forces, notably Philip II of Spain and the powerful house of Guise in France, were to enrol themselves as its soldiers.

Calvinism.—On the Protestant side, the leadership was passing from Luther and his friends, who temporised to win princely support, to the stern, unflinching French reformer Calvin. By 1541 Calvin had established a sort of theocratic State in the free city of Geneva, which had become the refuge and the seminary of the more enthusiastic Protestant teachers from all countries—the seed-plot from which a more unbending and fanatical form of Protestantism was very rapidly spread over Europe. In short, fanaticism was rising on both sides, and the way was being prepared for the fierce wars of religion of the second half of the century—wars which were to have the most momentous influence upon the future history of the British peoples.

Closer Relations of England and Scotland.—During the period covered by this chapter—the reigns of Edward VI and Mary in England, and the minority of Mary of Scotland—these new forces were taking shape. What is more, it was becoming clear that the destinies of England and Scotland were closely intertwined. In the event, it was by the establishment of an effective partnership between them that the issue was decided, as it practically was in 1560; and both England and Scotland were committed to the Protestant cause. The progressive interlocking of the interests of England and Scotland, which was one of the main features of this period, was due to three causes. The first was the growing influence, in both countries, of the preachers of Protestantism. The second was the uncertainty of the succession to the English crown, and the fact that the young Queen of Scots was in the line of succession. The third was the rivalry of France and Spain, both of whom hoped to bring England and Scotland under their influence.

2. Edward VI and Premature Protestantism (1547–1553)

The Alienation of Scotland.—At the opening of the period the relations between England and Scotland passed into an acute stage. The new king of England, Edward VI, was a sickly boy of nine. The chief control of affairs fell to his uncle, the Earl of Hertford, who now became Duke of Somerset and Protector. Somerset, who had led campaigns against Scotland at the end of Henry VIII's reign, was eager to bring about a union of the crowns, and dreamt of a united Britain "having the sea for wall and mutual love for its garrison." At this moment Mary Queen of Scots was five years old, her country was torn asunder by faction-fighting among the nobles, and her mother, Mary of Guise, was striving to secure the predominance of French influence. The Scottish Protestants were beginning to be bold. A band of them had in 1546 murdered Archbishop Beton and seized his castle of St. Andrews, where they were still holding out in 1547. Among the besieged was John Knox, an ardent priest recently converted to Protestantism. Somerset conceived the idea of at once helping the Scottish Protestants, and bringing about a marriage between Edward and Mary. For this purpose he invaded Scotland, defeated the Scots at *Pinkie*, near Edinburgh, and again ravaged the south-eastern counties. These methods of violence of course defeated his aims. "I mislike not the match, but the method of wooing," said one of the Scottish nobles. The Scottish Protestants were discredited as an unpatriotic party, and for a time their cause had a set-back. The child-queen was sent to France to be educated (1548); and there, in 1558, she was married to Francis II, who became king of France in 1559. Meanwhile the French were all-powerful in Scotland. Such were the results of violence.

The Protector Somerset.—Somerset * was a well-meaning man, of some generosity of mind, but he was not strong enough to deal with the difficult problems left by Henry VIII. Quite apart from the dangers of religious controversy, which Henry had violently repressed, there were other dangers. The treasury was empty; trade had been thrown into confusion by the debased currency; and all over the country, but especially in the eastern and midland counties,

* There is a good study of Somerset by A. F. Pollard.

there was seething discontent on the question of enclosures. Attracted by the profits to be made from the sale of wool, landlords were turning ploughlands into pasture ; and as sheep-tending needed less labour than tillage, there was an army of unemployed, who (in the absence of other means of livelihood) took to vagabondage and sometimes to brigandage. This agrarian problem had long been a difficulty, and it had been intensified by the suppression of the monasteries. The great preacher, Hugh Latimer—who may almost be described as the first of English popular orators *—was denouncing these evils, and the greed of the landlords ; a new peasants' rising seemed possible. Somerset sympathised with the grievances of the rural classes, and even tried to get remedial legislation through Parliament. But here he was opposed by the landowning class, who controlled Parliament. He was neither strong enough nor firm enough to deal with the problem ; and in the end it brought about his downfall.

An Experiment in Toleration.—A sincere Protestant, and (for his time and class) a liberal-minded man, Somerset allowed the powerful engine of tyranny, which Cromwell and Henry VIII had created, to be destroyed. The Proclamations Act was repealed, and Parliament—once more active—resumed its powers. The fierce treason law of Henry VIII was modified. The Act of the Six Articles, with its cruel persecuting clauses, was cancelled, and even Henry IV's old act *de heretico comburendo* was repealed. There was to be no religious persecution in England ; and, in fact, nobody lost his life for his religious opinions during the reign of Edward VI. The immediate result was an inrush of Protestant preachers, foreigners and exiled Englishmen, some of them inspired by the stern doctrines of Calvin. A fever of discussion arose, which was dangerous to public order, now that the strong hand of the tyrant was removed ; and Hugh Latimer was the inspiring orator of a Protestant movement, which took strong root in the south and east, though as yet the more backward north and west were little affected.

Introduction of Protestantism.—Somerset himself was a Protestant, and under his lead the purely political changes of Henry VIII were succeeded by rapid changes in doctrine and discipline, which had a very disturbing effect upon the minds of the people. The surviving endowments of the Church were attacked. Hundreds of "chantries" (endowments for prayers for the dead,

* Latimer's Sermons are included in Everyman's Library.

the priests of which often kept school in their spare time) were suppressed as superstitious. The religious and charitable endowments of the Gilds were also suppressed. Some of the wealth thus seized was used to relieve the treasury ; most of it went into private pockets, including Somerset's own, who found from this source the means to build his superb palace of Somerset House ; only a little was reserved for educational endowments, and thus a great opportunity was lost. The Edward VI grammar-schools scattered over the country represent the paltry share of this plunder which was reserved for public uses. Commissions were sent round the country to destroy images, and much needless vandalism was committed. The Catholic bishops, such as Bonner and Gardiner, resisted these proceedings in vain ; they were imprisoned and deprived of their jurisdiction. Priests were allowed to marry. A Book of Homilies, setting forth the new doctrines, was issued for the use of the clergy, to be read to their congregations. Finally, in 1549, a new order of service in English, the *First Prayer-book of Edward VI*, was drawn up by Cranmer, and imposed upon all English churches by an *Act of Uniformity*. The new book was in the main a translation of the old Latin service, done into noble and lovely English, and it did not make very great changes in doctrine. But it brought home the suddenness of the change to every parish, and slow-moving minds everywhere were perturbed and distressed.

Popular Risings.—This combination of social and religious unrest led to the most serious upheaval that England had seen since 1381. There was a revolt against the religious changes in Devon and Cornwall (1549), so formidable that Exeter was besieged, and German mercenaries had to be employed to repress it. A little later there were many sporadic risings against enclosures. The most serious was in the Eastern counties, where a squire named Robert Ket took the lead of a mob which pulled down enclosures, seized and tried unpopular landlords, and sent up demands for reform to the Council. Somerset would have liked to do something for them, but Council and Parliament were against him. Because of these hesitations, the rebellion became dangerous ; Ket actually defeated the king's troops, and stormed Norwich. This rebellion was only dispersed by the vigorous action of Dudley, Earl of Warwick, son of Henry VII's extortioner, who was Somerset's chief rival in the Council.

Fall of Somerset.—Somerset had already found much difficulty in maintaining his power. He had been compelled to use the

ugly method of an Act of Attainder to deal with a conspiracy formed by his own brother, Thomas Seymour, a turbulent man, who (though he held the office of Lord High Admiral) had made the Scilly Islands a centre of piracy : Seymour had planned to marry the Princess Elizabeth and oust his brother from power ; he paid for his folly with the loss of his head. This episode had already discredited Somerset. His failure to deal firmly with the insurrections ruined him. He ceased to be Protector, and was sent for a time to the Tower ; and his place was taken by Warwick, later Duke of Northumberland, with the office of Lord President of the Council.

Northumberland and More Rapid Change.—Northumberland was purely a self-seeker, who cared nothing for religion, but joined with his colleagues in still further plundering the Church, reducing the revenues of bishoprics, and even threatening the endowments of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges. His power depended upon his influence with the young king ; and Edward—a precocious and serious-minded boy—was an earnest Protestant, eager that his reign should see the triumph of the Faith in England. So Northumberland threw himself into the support of extreme Protestantism. Foreign theologians were installed at Oxford and Cambridge, where they taught the future clergy. Advanced Protestants were appointed to the bishoprics from which Catholics had been extruded. Ridley in London, and Hooper in Gloucester, were extremists in theology —Hooper, indeed, was a Puritan before his time. John Knox, who had been released from the French galleys at Edward's intercession, and had taken refuge in England, was among these enthusiastic leaders ; though he refused a bishopric, he wielded even greater influence as the king's chaplain. Cranmer, whose views were steadily becoming more advanced, undertook a revision of the Prayer-book, which embodied substantial changes in doctrine, and especially the abandonment of transubstantiation. In 1552 the *Second Prayer-book of Edward VI* (which is, in most essentials, the same as the modern prayer-book) was imposed upon all English churches. In the next year (1553) the reformed creed was defined in Forty-two Articles of Religion—the basis of Elizabeth's Thirty-nine Articles. Based on Luther's confession, these Articles showed that England had adopted a definitely Protestant position.

Northumberland's Plot.—But all these changes had taken place far too rapidly to be accepted by the mass of the people ; Protestantism had not yet really taken root anywhere save in London

and parts of the south-east. The permanence of this Protestant settlement depended upon the continuance of the government which had imposed it. And the frail young king was obviously not likely to live long ; while his destined successor, Mary, was a very sincere Catholic, certain to reverse all that had been done. Northumberland recognised that his own position was insecure. To make it safe, he must have a sovereign under his influence. For that purpose he decided to pass over both Mary and her sister Elizabeth, and also Mary Queen of Scots, who would have been the next heir (as the granddaughter of Henry VIII's elder sister) ; and he chose Lady Jane Grey, granddaughter of Henry VIII's younger sister.* Lady Jane, a gentle, pious, and learned girl, was married to Northumberland's son, Guildford Dudley, and the young king was persuaded to make a will in her favour. The will was scarcely made when Edward died (July 1553). Lady Jane was promptly declared queen. But nobody wanted a continuance of the Northumberland regime. Mary fled to Norfolk, and the gentry of that county, though largely Protestant, rallied to her support. When Northumberland tried to pursue her, his troops mutinied. He had to give in ; and the daughter of the injured Katherine of Aragon became queen. Northumberland went to the scaffold, having first made himself contemptible by forswearing Protestantism.

3. Mary and the Catholic Reaction (1553–1558)

Queen Mary.—The new queen was an embittered woman of thirty-seven. She had been declared illegitimate, and denied her natural place. Since her early girlhood, she had brooded on her own and her mother's wrongs. Her consolation had been her religion, to which she had remained staunch through all the changes. Now she was brought, as by the very finger of God, to the throne whose power would enable her to right the wrong. She felt that this was her supreme mission. She had the strong will of her family ; but her secluded life had put her out of touch with the moods of the time and the temper of her people.

Mary's Aims.—The first thing to be done was to repeal the Protestant legislation of Edward VI. But this needed the concurrence of Parliament. Parliament was not unwilling to return to

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

the system of Henry VIII. But it was watchful, suspicious, and difficult to handle : three elections had to be held during the first eighteen months of the reign. Though she regarded it as sacrilege, Mary had to use the royal supremacy to displace the reforming bishops and re-establish the mass. But this was not enough. She wanted to restore the supremacy of Rome. She knew that in this national feeling was against her. Even the displaced Catholic bishops, like Gardiner (who became her chief political adviser) had accepted and approved the royal supremacy. Among her entourage scarcely anybody shared her enthusiasm save Cardinal Pole, who came to England as papal legate, and was made Archbishop of Canterbury. But Pole was an exile : he had been attainted, and his mother had been executed, by Henry VIII ; and he came back with the bitterness of an exile. To force England back under Rome, Mary realised that she needed aid from without. She looked for it from Spain, her mother's home. Therefore, when Charles V, her cousin, suggested to her (1553) that she should marry his son Philip, in whose favour he was soon to abdicate (1556), she eagerly welcomed the proposal, despite the misgivings of her counsellors.

The Spanish Marriage.—This was a fatal blunder. Was England to become a dependency of Spain, as Scotland had become a dependency of France ? The prospect caused consternation. The gentry and yeomanry of Kent, led by Sir Thomas Wyatt and secretly backed by some of the greater nobles, revolted and for a moment threatened London. But Mary was a Tudor : she would not yield to a threat of force. Wyatt was defeated and beheaded ; and at this time also the gentle Lady Jane Grey, who had hitherto been spared, was sent to the block. Philip of Spain came to England, and the marriage was celebrated (1554). Its result was to cause the English people to regard Spain—hitherto an ally against France—with fear. For the Spanish match had two results : it made Mary feel strong enough to return to Rome, and to begin burning heretics ; and it involved England, ere long, in another profitless war with France. Even during Mary's reign English sailors in the Channel began to think it patriotic as well as profitable to practise piracy upon the ships that came and went between Spain and the Netherlands. The unauthorised sea war against the might of Spain began in the reign of Philip and Mary.

The Marian Persecution.—In 1554 and 1555 Henry VIII's breach with Rome was healed : Parliament was persuaded, though

not without difficulty, to repeal Henry's legislation, and to petition for readmission to the Roman communion. The old heresy laws were re-enacted, and a persecution was begun, which made an indelible mark upon the memory of the English people. First the Protestant bishops suffered. Hooper was burnt in his own city of Gloucester. Ridley and the beloved preacher Latimer were burnt at Oxford, "lighting that day," as Latimer bravely said, "a candle that would not be put out." Then came the turn of Cranmer, the chief author of the Prayer-book. His timidity and his profound belief in the necessity of submission to the royal will made him recant. But recantation brought no pardon; and in the article of death he recovered his courage, and sanctified the noble Book which was his greatest gift to his people by the fortitude with which he met his torture.

The Fires of Smithfield.—There were no more eminent victims: the nobles who had enriched themselves by the plunder of the monasteries felt no call to martyrdom. But there were nearly three hundred humbler victims—almost all drawn from the dioceses of Norwich, London, and Chichester, that is to say, from the south and east. Mary fondly believed that by these punishments she was crushing Protestantism. In reality the fires of Smithfield did more than all the preachers to make England Protestant. Protestantism had at last its martyrs. England was used to the spectacle of great men going to the scaffold because they had conspired against the king, or were a danger to the realm. But when simple folk, plain priests and tradesfolk, who had nothing to gain and everything to lose, braved the flames rather than recant their faith, the cause for which they died was ennobled. The story of these humble and obscure victims, enshrined in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563), became one of the common possessions of the English people, and made "Bloody Mary" an unforgettable name. Yet the unhappy queen was by no means severe, by the standards of her day: her three hundred victims in three years seem negligible in comparison with the thousands who suffered in the European countries during these grim years.

The Loss of Calais.—Many men were inclined to blame Spain—famous already for the cruelty of its Inquisition—for this novelty of religious persecution in England. And hatred and fear of Spain grew still deeper when, in 1557, England was drawn into the war which had been raging between France and Spain since 1552. Spain made great gains from this war, subjugating Italy and reducing

the Pope—for whom Mary had made such sacrifices—to dependence. With grim irony, the Pope revenged himself by condemning Cardinal Pole, Mary's chief adviser, for heresy. But while Spain gained, England lost. In January 1558, the French stormed Calais, the last remnant of the once splendid English possessions in France.

Death of Mary.—Before the end of the year which began with this loss the tragic queen died. She had killed Catholicism in England, which she hoped to save ; and by the loss of Calais she had put an end for ever to those continental ambitions, a relic of the Middle Ages, to which Henry VIII had still clung, and cleared the ground for the new period of oversea adventure which was to begin so gloriously in the next reign. Mary died, knowing that she had failed ; with the same bitter sense of failure her friend and mentor, Cardinal Pole, died within twelve hours of his unhappy mistress. Their death lifted a nightmare from England ; and as the sad queen lay still, "all the churches in London did ring, and men did make bonfires and set tables in the street, and did eat and drink and make merry for the new queen."

4. The Elizabethan Settlement (1558–1560)

Queen Elizabeth.—The new queen, twenty-five years old, was called to a delicate and perilous task.* Before she was a year old her mother had died on the scaffold ; in the eyes of all good Catholics she was a child of sin, with no right to the throne ; her own father and his Parliament had put her under the stigma of illegitimacy ; all her life she had been lonely ; she had had to walk warily, surrounded with pitfalls, and more than once the shadow of the scaffold had fallen upon her. She had learnt to keep her own counsel, to be reticent and smiling, to wait upon events with courage, and to use deceit as a weapon of defence. These qualities stood her in good stead in the difficult times which lay before her. She had an acute and highly trained intellect ; she had pride, and a firm will, and a shrewd judgment of men and facts. She was free from fanaticism, having no strong religious beliefs : for her, unlike her brother and sister, the religious problem was primarily a political problem, and her aim was so to handle it as to maintain the unity of the nation.

* There are good short Lives of Elizabeth by E. S. Beesly (Twelve English Statesmen) and by Bishop Creighton.

The Situation in 1558.—For this was the main danger that she had to face : after the rival fanaticisms of the last ten years, national unity was endangered. And national unity was all-important in view of the perils of the international situation. The queen's cousin, Mary of Scotland, who was the next heir, and in the eyes of good Catholics the rightful successor to the English throne, married in this same year (1558) the heir to the French crown. Already, under the regency of Mary of Guise, Scotland had almost been turned into a province of France. The danger was that France might try for the control of all Britain through Mary ; and if the English were divided by acute religious strife, the attempt might be successful. The main safeguard against this danger was the jealousy between France and Spain. But in 1559 these enemies made peace, and there was talk of an alliance between them for the destruction of heresy. In any case, to be dependent upon Spain was hateful to the English mind. England seemed to be "a bone between two mastiffs." Two things were necessary for an escape from this position. The first was a judicious settlement of the religious question in England, of such a kind that all but extremists would accept it. The second was the removal of the peril from Scotland. Both ends were attained by 1560.

The Religious Problem.—The difficulty of reaching a satisfactory solution of the religious problem was shown when all Mary's bishops, with one exception, refused to recognise the new queen, or even to be present at her coronation. She had to be crowned by the Bishop of Carlisle. This necessarily threw Elizabeth on to the support of the Protestants. But as the Catholics were still a majority in the country, it was obviously necessary to avoid offending them. The settlement was left mainly to a freely elected Parliament, tactfully guided by the queen and her ministers. The recalcitrant bishops were allowed to take a full part in the discussion, both in the House of Lords and in Convocation. They opposed every stage in the settlement, and were steadily overridden by the laymen of both houses. The Elizabethan Church settlement was a laymen's settlement, reached after discussion, and not imposed by authority. When it was completed, all but two of the Marian bishops refused to accept it. Not until then were they replaced by Protestant divines ; but Elizabeth did her best to select moderate men. If national unity was to be preserved, religious controversy must be calmed as much as possible.

The Elizabethan Settlement. — The main lines of the settlement were embodied in two Acts, passed by Parliament in 1559. The *Act of Supremacy* once more abolished papal authority in England. But Elizabeth was careful to avoid the irritating title "Supreme Head of the Church"; she was content to be described as "supreme of all persons and causes ecclesiastical as well as civil." The *Act of Uniformity* fixed the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England by adopting the Second Prayer-book of Edward VI, with a few modifications. The modifications were designed to remove causes of offence. There is not a word against Rome in the Prayer-book, and it contained nothing which was definitely inconsistent with Catholic belief. It could be accepted by all Catholics who were not strongly Romanist; and during the first ten years of the reign it was gradually accepted by the great majority. Only two hundred priests had to be deprived, during the first six years of the reign, for refusing to accept it. Elizabeth was right in trusting to time and use to make her compromise acceptable. Until she was made the object of plots and conspiracies, she carefully avoided every semblance of persecution. It was not for her, as she said, "to open windows into her subjects' hearts"; and so long as they did not openly repudiate the ordinances fixed by authority, they were left undisturbed. The Elizabethan settlement plainly was not the outcome of religious zeal. It was a compromise dictated by political necessity, and for that reason was unsatisfactory to enthusiasts on both sides. But it worked; it had the great merit that it was reached by the consent of reasonable men, after a period of turmoil which had imperilled national unity.

5. The Reformation in Scotland

French Power in Scotland.—Somerset's invasion and the battle of Pinkie had given a set-back to the growth of Protestantism in Scotland. It had made Scotland dependent upon France. The French domination became most marked when, in 1554, Mary of Guise became Regent: there was a French army of occupation, and every important Scottish castle except Edinburgh was garrisoned by French troops. The rule of Mary of Guise in Scotland and of Mary Tudor in England filled John Knox* with despair; these women

* There is a good short Life of John Knox by F. MacCunn.

seemed to have destroyed his hope of a union of the sister kingdoms in a common loyalty to Protestantism ; and he wrote a fierce denunciation of them—*The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment* (rule) *of Women.* But Mary of Guise was no more able to control the turbulent Scottish nobles than the Scottish kings had been. They bitterly resented the French domination, and gave their support to the Protestant preachers, whom, for that reason, Mary of Guise was quite unable to suppress : she only dared to burn one heretic, in 1558. Protestantism was becoming in Scotland the creed of patriotism. Just as the Protestant cause was forwarded in England by fear of Spain, so it was forwarded in Scotland by fear of France.

The Lords of the Congregation.—In 1555 John Knox—exiled from England after the death of his patron Edward VI—spent ten months in preaching and in organising the Protestant party throughout Scotland. He won some notable adherents, especially Queen Mary's illegitimate half-brother, Lord James Stewart, who became the rallying-point of the opposition. What was more significant, the new faith was now being adopted with enthusiasm not merely by nobles as a standard of opposition, but by the smaller landowners, the townsmen and the peasantry. In 1557 a group of nobles organised a confederacy for the protection of the new faith, and swore to the first of Scotland's "covenants." Nobles, preachers, lairds, and burghers had their place in this "Congregation of the Lord" ; and "the Lords of the Congregation," who were its spokesmen, were no longer merely a group of feudal rebels, but represented a real national movement.

Knox and the Religious Revolution.—In 1559 the grim and fearless Knox returned from Geneva, where he had been mastering the stern doctrine and discipline of Calvin, to take the lead in this national movement. A religious revolution, accompanied by a great deal of vandalism, swept over Scotland. Mary of Guise strove in vain to resist it : even the disciplined troops of France could not hold down the country. By the end of 1559 the Regent's main force was hemmed in by the insurgents at Leith, where it waited for the coming of French reinforcements by sea. But the position of the Protestants was precarious : if French aid came in time, they might easily be ruined.

Anglo-Scottish Alliance.—During this critical year of civil war, earnest appeals were made to Elizabeth for aid. Knox himself

went to implore her, though the denouncer of "the monstrous regiment of women" was not a very suitable ambassador to the Virgin Queen. Elizabeth hesitated: she did not want to disturb her Catholic subjects, or to run the risk of war with France. As was her way, she put off her decision to the eleventh hour. But it was made before the twelfth. An English fleet was sent to the Forth, to cut off any possibility of aid from France; an English army marched northwards to help in the siege of Leith. This was the first occasion upon which England and Scotland had ever co-operated, and the result of their co-operation was to secure the freedom of both countries and the triumph of Protestantism throughout Britain.

The Treaty of Edinburgh.—The fall of Leith was indeed an important event in British history. It was followed by the Treaty of Edinburgh (1560), to which France was a party. Mary Queen of Scots was to cease to use the arms of England. Both English and French forces were to be withdrawn from Scotland. While Mary remained in France, the government of Scotland was to be in the hands of a commission of Scottish nobles. Scotland was left free and Protestant; and the English army marched back, followed, as no English army had ever been before, by the gratitude of Scotland.

Scottish Presbyterianism.—The sequel of this victory was a religious settlement in Scotland, the main lines of which were defined by Knox. It was a settlement of a very different character from that of Elizabeth. At a meeting of the Estates, papal jurisdiction was abolished, the celebration of the mass was forbidden, and a Confession of Faith, drawn up on strict Calvinistic lines, was adopted. No persecution accompanied this settlement: not a single Catholic was burnt. Knox would fain have completed the settlement by the institution of a full parochial system, with a well-equipped school in every parish. He was unable to do so in full, because the nobles (as in England) seized most of the wealth of the Church for themselves, leaving only a bare pittance for the maintenance of the clergy; and if they agreed to the abolition of episcopacy, it was mainly because they wanted the lands of the bishops. But Knox was able to secure that in every parish the minister should be assisted by a body of lay "elders," and that both clergy and laity should be represented in the supreme ruling body of the Church, the General Assembly. In this way he gave a democratic character to the Church, so that it became, what the Scottish Parliament had never been, a true exponent of the nation's mind.

Beginning of Modern Scotland.—Knox was baffled by the greed of the nobles in much of his constructive policy; and the full organisation of the Presbyterian system was not worked out until a good deal later (1580–1592). Nevertheless he, more than any other single man, had remodelled the Scottish nation. The years 1559 and 1560 mark the transition, for Scotland, from the mediæval to the modern era—a transition far more sudden than that of England. Until 1559, Scotland was still a land of feudal and tribal anarchy—a worse anarchy than her neighbour had ever known. After 1559, though nobles and clansmen were still to give much trouble, Scotland possessed in her Church a system of national organisation that could never be disregarded; she had set before herself the ideal of a national system of education, and she succeeded in attaining it far in advance of any other European country. She had also submitted, more completely than any other western land, to the stern discipline of an iron creed, which has moulded the character of her sons. All this she owed to John Knox.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BREWING OF WAR (1560–1584)

1. A Period of Peace and Reconstructive Work

The Wars of Religion.—The great reign which was now commencing in England covered a period of intense religious strife in Europe. Protestantism had to fight for its life against the Counter-Reformation. The Catholics took the aggressive. They were inspired by the reforms which the Council of Trent had carried out (1562); they were stimulated by the unresting zeal of the great Jesuit order; and they were backed by the power of mighty princes, of whom the strongest was Philip II of Spain.* Philip had succeeded to the dominions of his father, Charles V, in 1556, though the imperial title went to his uncle, Ferdinand of Austria. He commanded all the resources of Spain and the Netherlands, and was also practically master of Italy. But in addition to all this, the Spanish dominions

* There is a short Life of Philip II by M. A. S. Hume (Foreign Statesmen).

in the New World *—since the conquest of Mexico by Cortez (1519–1521) and of Peru by Pizarro and his successors (1531–1537)—were sending every year vast quantities of the precious metals, which supplied him with the sinews of war. The Spanish armies were accounted invincible; the Spanish fleets were the greatest on the seas. Moreover, in 1559 the long war between France and Spain had been brought to an end, and the despots of the two mightiest realms in Christendom had agreed to devote their strength to crushing out heresy. Henry II of France and his weaker successors had set themselves to destroy the French Protestants (Huguenots): the attempt led to a long series of civil wars in France which for a generation reduced that country to impotence, but in 1560 it might well appear that French Protestantism could not survive. Philip II himself had taken up the task of rooting out heresy from his dominions in the Netherlands.† The result was to be a formidable revolt, which strained his resources. But at first no resistance seemed possible, and it was not until the end of the century that the Northern Netherlands made their independence secure. If Protestantism in France and the Netherlands were crushed, England's turn would assuredly come next; and the justification for an attack on England was ready, in the claim of Mary Queen of Scots to the English throne.

England at Peace.—In these perilous circumstances, there were many ardent Protestants in England who held that Elizabeth, queen of the only considerable Protestant country, ought to take the lead of the Protestant cause, and make open alliance with the French Huguenots and the oppressed Netherlanders. Even her most trusted minister, William Cecil (later Lord Burghley) ‡, who became Secretary of State on the day of her accession, and either in that office or as Treasurer was her principal adviser until his death in 1598, would have liked to adopt a more definitely Protestant line. But the queen steadfastly refused to be committed. She would not go to war on any pretext, if she could avoid it. She even allowed France to keep Calais, for a ransom of 500,000 crowns. For more than a quarter of a century—apart from one brief and unsuccessful expedition in 1562–1563 in aid of the French Protestants—she kept the peace, though the difficulty of doing so became greater every year. By

* For the Spanish Empire see School Atlas, Plates 43*a*, 48*a* and 52*b*.
† See the Map of the Netherlands, School Atlas, Plate 22*a*.
‡ Macaulay has an essay on Burghley.

every kind of shift, she strove to avert a breach—leading on Philip II, at first, to hope that she would marry him, and later that she was a Catholic at heart and would sooner or later turn ; carrying on long and tedious flirtations with French princes whom she never had the slightest intention of marrying ; using every honest and dishonest device to stave off the disaster of war.

Elizabethan Policy.—What were her reasons ? It is said that she had too high a view of royal power to give willing support to rebels, and that she disliked the extreme Calvinism of the continental Protestants, as of the Scots. No doubt this is true ; but it would not have prevented her from going to war if she had thought it advantageous to do so. She kept peace for twenty-five years—a longer spell of peace than England had ever known—because she rightly believed that a long spell of peace was necessary for the safety and well-being of England ; and because there was a vast deal of reconstructive work to be done after the turmoils of the previous generation. This work of reconstruction was perhaps the most important achievement of her reign : more important even than the glories which were won at sea in her later years, because these would have been impossible without it.

The Religious Balance.—In the first place, the religious settlement was as yet only a paper settlement : it had to be given time, and defended against attack from both sides. This work was entrusted to a *High Commission Court*, established in 1559 as the instrument of the royal supremacy, and presided over by Matthew Parker, the wise and moderate archbishop whom Elizabeth had chosen. It wielded very great powers, independent of the ordinary law-courts. In particular, it assumed powers of censorship over the press, striving to keep controversy within bounds. In order to drive the mass of Catholics into acceptance of the new order, it worked out a system of fines for non-attendance at church, which were gradually made more severe. Strict Catholics thus paid no worse penalty than a fine, so long as they were not active in opposition. But the great mass went to church rather than pay, and soon got used to the new service-book. More difficult to deal with were the extremists on the other side, inspired by the ideas of Geneva, who wanted to get rid of every relic of what they called " Papistry" and objected even to the ecclesiastical vestments ordained by the rubrics. In 1566 Parker issued a series of *Advertisements* notifying the clergy that the order of service must be strictly observed, and that the surplice and

other vestments must be duly worn. This caused an outcry, and thirty "Puritan" incumbents (the word had come into use as early as 1564) were extruded in London alone in 1566. The "Puritan" party was already becoming formidable: Cartwright, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, was advocating the Presbyterian system as early as 1569. It was to become much more formidable later, after the crisis of the reign had passed. In the meanwhile it was kept within bounds; and by the time the crisis came, the mass of the nation had accepted the new system as part of its normal life. This would not have happened if there had been a religious war.

2. Social and Economic Changes

Agrarian Changes.—It was not only in the religious sphere that a period of settlement was needed. There had been growing social unrest during the first half of the century; it had been illustrated by Ket's rising and many other minor disturbances. The enclosures for sheep-rearing were only a part of the trouble. England was passing through the last stages of the break-up of the old manorial system, in which men's rights and duties had been unalterably fixed by custom, and into the new system in which landlords rented their lands to the highest bidder, and tried to work their estates on a commercial basis. The last English villeins disappeared in this period. Enclosures for sheep-rearing were only one aspect of this change: enclosures of the old open fields with their innumerable strips, in order to make more productive farming possible, were another.

Industrial Changes.—The industrial system of the Middle Ages was also rapidly breaking down. The rigid rules of the "misteries" (see p. 108) were being found obstructive. Capitalist employers (especially in the cloth-trades), refusing to be hampered by these restrictions, were tending to transfer their activities from the old towns where the "misteries" ruled into villages and the open country; and the new industries which were springing up were taking the same course. This is why there were constant complaints that all the towns were "decaying." But this was not all. Escaping from the "misteries," the employers were left free from all regulation and control, and they often treated their workpeople with great unfairness. For the protection of the workers a new system of regulation was needed.

Unemployment.—Out of these changes another evil had come

—the evil of unemployment, among men who were uprooted from their old occupations; and from this had followed a great deal of vagabondage and disorder. Meanwhile the old sources from which some sort of relief for indigence had been available had disappeared: Henry VIII had dissolved the monasteries; Somerset had seized the religious and charitable funds of the gilds or "misteries." Under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary, there had been a great deal of discussion of these problems, and many attempts had been made to remedy them, and especially to deal with vagabondage. In 1536 the Reformation Parliament had ordained that collections should be taken for the relief of poverty in every church, and this was the beginning of parochial poor-relief. But it had not sufficed; and Somerset, in desperation, had tried the methods of ferocity—ordaining that vagabonds might be branded and employed as slaves. None of these proposed remedies went to the root of the matter.

Need for a New Social Policy.—Evidently some intelligent national policy had to be adopted for dealing with all these problems. They could no longer be left to chance, or to the working of the old mediæval institutions which were manifestly breaking down. It is the greatest tribute to the efficiency of Elizabeth's government that it found means of dealing with these difficulties which helped to bring a new prosperity and contentment to England, and which worked satisfactorily, in their main lines, for two hundred years. This was the foundation upon which the glorious deeds of the later part of the reign rested.

Lord Burghley.—The credit for this work must be given to Elizabeth's very competent and hard-working Privy Council, and especially to her great minister William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, who deserves to rank among the greatest of English statesmen. He was a man of immense industry, an economist as well as a statesman, and he had a genius for detail. He was the principal author of the Elizabethan social code; and it was his assiduous work which made it successful. But he was helped by Parliament, which—while generally content to leave ecclesiastical and foreign policy to the queen's wisdom—took the deepest interest in these questions of national reorganisation.

Labour Policy.—The first element in the new system was the *Statute of Artificers* (1563). This was a great national Act, regulating the conditions of employment in all industries, and thus overriding the infinitely variable regulations of the "misteries." Whether in

town or in country, the same rules were to hold. All able-bodied men were to be liable to serve as agricultural labourers, unless entitled to work at another craft. All contracts of employment were to be for at least a year, in order to give security of employment. All employers were to give testimonials to their workers when they left their service. All craftsmen were to undergo a period of seven years' apprenticeship, and service as an apprentice was to be the only requirement for licence to practise a trade, whether in town or country. This took the place of the infinitely variable system previously existing, and it prevented the " misteries " from forbidding men to practise their crafts. The enforcement of this Act—which was an ambitious attempt to organise the whole labour-force of the country—was not easy. It was entrusted to the Justices of the Peace, who were very closely looked after by the Privy Council. For a long time it seems to have worked well. It put an end to the decay of the towns, for there was now no reason why employers should avoid the towns in order to escape from the " misteries." It also put an end to the complaint that employers were employing untrained men.

Fixation of Wages.—With this went a great extension of the practice of fixing wage-rates by the authority of the Justices. To some extent the Justices had been doing this for a long time, under the Statutes of Labourers. But they were now required to fix wage-rates for all occupations pursued in their districts ; and their duty was not merely to fix a maximum (*i.e.* to keep wages down) but to fix a fair wage in view of all the circumstances. All these wage-rates, before becoming legally binding, had to be approved by the Privy Council, which took its duties, for a long time, very seriously. The Justices took much expert advice, and their tables of wage-rates were often extremely elaborate. The main purpose of the whole system was to give fair-play to the worker—to do for him what he could not do for himself until the Trade Union system came into being. And until the Privy Council ceased to take its work seriously (which happened in the next century) the system seems to have worked well. At any rate, there was a cessation of the bitter complaints which had earlier been heard.

Relief of Destitution.—A third element in the social code was provision for the relief of poverty and for the treatment of unemployment. In 1563 the Justices were empowered to obtain weekly contributions from those who neglected the duty of

alms-giving ; in 1572 this was changed into the regular assessment of contributions from every householder—the beginning of poor-rates ; and in 1576 the Justices were required to arrange for the provision of work, which unemployed men must do in return for pay, on penalty of going to a House of Correction. The raising and spending of the rates were entrusted, in each parish, to overseers appointed by the Justices. These provisions, in the first period of the reign, anticipated all the main features of the great Poor Law of 1601, at the very end of the reign, which continued to be the basis of all arrangements for the relief of poverty and unemployment until 1834. At last a sensible way of dealing with the problem of destitution had been found : the community had accepted responsibility for the maintenance of its poorer members.

Encouragement of Industry.—Not content with these provisions for dealing with the social difficulties of the age, Cecil was unwearied in his endeavours for the improvement of British industry, shipping and trade ; and under his guidance all three made immense advances. Unquestionably this progress was made possible by the twenty-five years of peace, during which England gained great advantages at the expense of France and the Netherlands, which were being devastated by war. Persecuted artificers poured into England : Cecil welcomed and encouraged them, so long as they accepted the English economic system ; the exclusive privileges of the "misteries" no longer stood in their way. He was also assiduous in stimulating new industries, often by the grant of patents for a series of years. These patents or "monopolies" were later a subject of vehement protest, and undoubtedly there were abuses ; but the system certainly led to a very rapid development of new activities—notably new forms of cloth, glass, cutlery, paper-making and sugar-refining. German miners were brought in to develop the mineral resources of England, and Cecil watched very carefully the use of English timber resources. He was particularly concerned about the provision of munitions, especially gunpowder and cannon. It had been calculated by Spain, at the beginning of the reign, that England could not be dangerous because she had no secure supply of these necessities of war, as they now were. It was mainly Cecil who made good this deficiency—and thereby perhaps defeated the Armada.

Growth of Shipping and Oversea Trade.—Finally, Cecil saw more clearly than any of his predecessors that England's future lay on the seas. He did everything in his power to stimulate

shipbuilding by bounties and in other ways, to encourage exploration, and to build up English foreign trade by means of charters to trading companies and the like. During the twenty-five years of peace the English mercantile marine—helped by the adversity of other lands—increased with a rapidity unknown before ; while at the same time the Royal Navy was enlarged by the construction of ships of new design, taught by the experience won during the great adventures of these years. When the peace ended, and the time for fighting came, it was on the sea that the English mainly fought. England's ships were now her weapon of offence and defence, no longer (what they had been from William the Conqueror to Henry VIII) merely the means of ferrying armies across to fight battles in France.

In every way, it was the work of these long years of precarious peace that made possible the glories of a later period. The strength and the unity of England had been secured. In comparison with this, the political and diplomatic events which filled the minds of contemporaries were relatively unimportant. Yet they also had their significance.

3. The Romantic Adventures of Mary Queen of Scots (1561–1568)

In regard to foreign relations the twenty-five years' peace falls into two clearly marked periods. The first, extending from 1560 to 1568, was dominated by the charm, the passion, and the romance of Mary Queen of Scots. The second, extending from 1568 to 1585, was filled with conspiracies, and was marked by a growing intensity of religious conflict, both in England and in Europe.

Mary Queen of Scots.—Having sat for one brief year upon the brilliant throne of France, Mary of Scotland,* a beautiful and vivacious widow of nineteen, returned to her native land, from which she had been absent since infancy, to make what headway she could against brutal nobles and grim reformers. In a strange land, and all alone, she set herself to build up a party and prepare for a challenge to the throne of her powerful cousin. She had no weapons but cleverness and charm, but these were so strong that they frightened old John Knox. For four years she was careful, making friends of

* There is a short Life of Mary Queen of Scots by Florence MacCunn.

her half-brother Lord James (whom she made Earl of Moray) and other Protestant lords, and asking mildly, though in vain, that she should be recognised as Elizabeth's successor. Meanwhile (1562) civil war had broken out in France, and this made it clear that she must not trust to French aid, but must depend upon her own resources.

The Marriage and Murder of Darnley.—In 1565 she made a clever marriage, choosing her second-cousin, Lord Darnley —like herself a grandson of Henry VIII's sister, though by a second marriage *—and thus strengthened her title to the English crown. But Darnley was an empty-headed young man, whom she could not make a partner in her plans. She refused him the title of king, and gave all her confidence to her clever Italian secretary, Riccio. Some of the rude Scottish nobles made a "band" or confederacy to overthrow Riccio, and jealousy brought Darnley into the plot. They burst into Holyrood on March 9th, 1566, and murdered Riccio almost at his mistress's feet. This brutal deed turned the young queen into a tiger. She spurned her contemptible husband, and even excluded him from the christening of their son (afterwards James VI and I), who was born three months after the murder. Later, covering her hatred with smiles, she was reconciled with Darnley; but meanwhile she seems to have been privy to a new "band" against him, in which the leading spirit was a daring border lord, the Earl of Bothwell. Less than a year after the murder of Riccio (February 1567), Darnley's dead body was found in the garden of a lonely house where he had been lodged by the queen's desire. The house was blown up by gunpowder placed in the queen's room; and Mary had been sitting with her husband on the day before the murder, while the gunpowder was being put in place. The murderer was Bothwell. He was charged with his crime, but nobody dared to give evidence against him; and ere long, to the horror of everybody, Mary married the murderer. This was her ruin. Defeated at *Carberry Hill* (1567), she was deposed, and her year-old son was proclaimed king as James VI, the Earl of Moray and the Protestant nobles ruling in his name.

Mary's Flight to England.—For a year Mary lay a prisoner in the island-castle of Loch Leven. But she still had her power to charm; she won over even her gaoler, escaped from her prison, and put herself at the head of a new force. Once more she was defeated,

* See Genealogical Table D, at the end of the vluome.

at *Langside* near Glasgow (May 1568). A new imprisonment was not to be endured. She fled, and after a long ride of ninety miles, crossed the Solway and threw herself upon the mercy of her cousin. Elizabeth had been anxiously watching these wild deeds of her passionate cousin and rival. She had given clandestine encouragement to Mary's enemies, the Protestant lords. But what was she to do with her troublesome guest? Should she hand her over to her foes, or restore her to the Scottish throne and to freedom? She talked of both, but meanwhile held an inquiry into the charges against her. They rested mainly upon a casket of letters, said to have been captured from Bothwell. But the inquiry was inconclusive, and to this day the authenticity of the Casket Letters is a moot point among scholars. There is little reason to doubt Mary's guilt, but even across three centuries her charm still tells, and distorts the judgment of grave scholars. Elizabeth was well content that the point should be left open, and that Mary should be neither exonerated nor condemned. She had her, now, under observation, and ere long in captivity. But even in captivity Mary was dangerous: for twenty years she was the centre of conspiracies, until the end came at Fotheringay in 1587.

Sea Adventures.—The flight of Mary ends the first phase of Elizabeth's foreign relations. During this period she had given help to the French Protestants (1562–1563), in order to keep France occupied and unable to help Mary; for a moment she had held Havre, placed in her hands as a pledge by the Huguenots. Towards Philip of Spain she had been carefully friendly, in spite of the cruelties his agents were practising in the Netherlands. But she had made no attempt to check the piracy that was steadily growing in the English Channel, where English and Huguenot ships, using in the main English harbours, were preying upon the traffic that passed to and fro between Spain and the Netherlands.* As early as 1562 there are said to have been four hundred of these raiders in the Channel, and they had taken seven hundred prizes. Philip made frequent protests. Elizabeth disavowed all responsibility for the pirates, but she did not even try to check them. They were building up the fighting power of England, and their indefensible deeds were teaching them the sailor-craft and the daring in attack which later won victory over the Great Armada.

* On all this read Froude's fascinating *English Seamen of the Sixteenth Century*.

Hawkins and Drake.—Farther afield, too, English sailors were beginning in these quiet days to show a new daring. In 1562 John Hawkins went to West Africa for a cargo of negro slaves, and sold them, at a great profit, in Spanish America, in defiance of the Spanish monopoly. Others followed his example. In 1564 Hawkins repeated the venture, and the queen privately subscribed for a share. And in 1567–1568, while Mary of Scotland was in the throes of her tragedy, Hawkins went out once more, and this time his fleet included two ships lent by the queen. With him was his young cousin, Francis Drake. He forced the Spanish towns to trade with him, and was about to return home after a prosperous voyage, when he was caught in the harbour of San Juan and so badly battered that he and Drake escaped with only two of their ships. Thus relations with Spain were beginning to be strained; and the English seamen, with mounting insolence, were learning to challenge the inviolate Spanish empire.

The Situation in 1568.—Evidently the peace which the queen cherished was precarious; and evidently she knew it. It was not only the flight of Mary Stuart which marked this year 1568 as the beginning of a new stage. In this same year civil war broke out afresh in France, after an interval of peace. And in this same year the Revolt of the Netherlands began, against the bloody tyranny which had been established by the Duke of Alva. Eager Protestants felt that the crisis of their faith was at hand. They would have liked to see Elizabeth come into the open as its defender. But she still held her hand. The precarious peace—becoming more precarious year by year—was still to last for seventeen years.

4. Conspiracies and Piracy (1568–1584)

Elizabeth and Philip II.—During the seventeen years from 1568 to 1585 events were working up to the inevitable culmination of a war against Spain for national existence. France had ceased to be a danger, because of her civil wars, and Elizabeth was at pains, throughout almost the whole of this period, to keep her on friendly terms by a pretence of marriage negotiations: even the terrible Massacre of St. Bartholomew (1572), when 10,000 French Protestants were murdered by the orders of the queen-mother, Catherine de Medici, did not interrupt these flirtations for more than a few months. Every year it became more obvious, both to Philip and to

Elizabeth, that war between them must come. They went, indeed, very near to it, Philip fomenting conspiracies against Elizabeth and making plans for invasions in support of them, while Elizabeth gave secret encouragement to piratical attacks upon Philip's empire. Yet they maintained the forms of peace : Philip because he wished to have done with the Netherlands before he tackled England ; Elizabeth because of her incurable preference for delay, and because the longer war was postponed, the stronger England would be to meet it. Two main features marked this difficult period. The first was a long series of plots to overthrow Elizabeth and put Mary in her place. The second was the rising boldness of the English seamen. Both Scotland and Ireland were worked into the tangled skein of conspiracy, and it was very plain that their fate now hung upon the fate of England.

Plots of 1569–1571.—In 1569 the earls of Westmorland and Northumberland led a rising specifically in favour of Mary and the old religion. It was easily crushed, without a battle—the last baronial rising in English history. In the same year a formidable revolt broke out in Ireland, which was only suppressed after desperate fighting that lasted for four years. In 1570 the Pope launched an excommunication against Elizabeth, and released all her Catholic subjects from their allegiance. This might have been very dangerous ten years earlier. But the mass of English Catholics had had time to become accustomed to the new order, and it was only a small minority of extremists who were influenced. Nevertheless, the excommunication changed the government's attitude towards the Catholics. It was made treason to bring a papal bull into England, or to become a convert to Rome. In the same year the Earl of Moray, the regent of Scotland, was assassinated, and during the next few years Queen Mary's party held up their heads again in the northern realm ; but the Kirk and its supporters among the nobles were too strong to be overthrown. In 1571 a formidable conspiracy was organised by Ridolfi, an Italian banker and agent of Philip II, who was behind the plot. There was to be a rising to release Mary, who was to marry the Duke of Norfolk and take the English throne ; and the rising was to be supported by an army sent by the Duke of Alva from the Netherlands. But Cecil and his agents knew all about the plot, and it came to nothing : Norfolk lost his head. Thus the years 1569–1571 were full of dangers ; they were perhaps the most serious crisis of the reign ; and the situation was the more serious because Spain was in these years apparently triumphant in the Netherlands.

The Seminary Priests and the Jesuits.—After this there was for some years a rest from conspiracies. It was clear that the English Catholics were too weak and half-hearted to rise. A systematic attempt was therefore made to revive their faith. Heroic Catholic missionaries stole into England, taking their lives in their hands, and went from house to house secretly. First came a number of seminary priests (1574 and later)—English exiles who had been trained at Douai in Philip's Flemish lands; then (1580) came members of the Jesuit order, notably the pure-minded and saintly poet Campion, and the shrewd intriguer Parsons. The influence wielded by the seminary priests and the Jesuits was so great as to alarm the government, and for the first time in Elizabeth's reign there was definite religious persecution. Between 1575 and the end of the reign 187 of these brave men lost their lives: they were put to death for treason, but they were none the less martyrs for their faith. This figure of 187 in twenty-eight years compares with the three hundred martyrs of Mary in three years. But both figures are insignificant in comparison with the wholesale slaughter that was going on in France and the Netherlands.

Murder Plots.—The plots of this later period were no longer schemes of rebellion and invasion. They were conspiracies to murder; for Philip II had sunk as low as this. His noble opponent, William of Orange, the leader of the revolt in the Netherlands, was got rid of in this way in 1584. And it was only the watchfulness and the excellent secret service of Elizabeth's ministers (especially Francis Walsingham, who became Secretary of State in 1573) that saved Elizabeth from a similar fate in 1583. In that year the Spanish ambassador in London, Mendoza, and the Jesuit missionary Parsons were both involved in a plot with Francis Throckmorton, a Cheshire gentleman, to murder the great queen. The plot was unmasked in time. Throckmorton was executed. And the Spanish ambassador was ordered out of the country. This was, in effect, a declaration of war (1584). The gloves were off.

The Association.—These threats to the life of the queen led to the organisation in 1584 of a nation-wide Association, the members of which pledged themselves to take vengeance on any one who plotted the queen's death, and on any person in whose favour such an attempt was made. There was no doubt who was intended by this phrase. Mary, now a close prisoner at Fotheringay, was the focus of all these plots; and many Englishmen had resolved that she must die.

Execution of Mary.—In 1586, after open war had begun, there was yet one last conspiracy ; and in this Mary was definitely involved. She had made a will disinheriting her son, and making Philip II her heir ; for he was now her only hope. Another murder plot against Elizabeth was hatched in Flanders ; and Anthony Babington, who had once been Mary's page, was chosen as the English agent to get together a group of assassins. Mary herself was privy to this plot, and letters from her to Babington were intercepted. Walsingham had been waiting and watching for this opportunity. Promptly Mary was tried before a commission at Fotheringay and found guilty. Parliament and the Privy Council demanded that she should be executed. Elizabeth hesitated, could not make up her mind. Perhaps she had pity for the ruined life of her cousin ; perhaps she put too high a value upon an anointed head ; most probably she hesitated to take a decisive step which would mean war to the knife. The Privy Council took the decision out of her hands, and in February, 1587, Mary was executed at Fotheringay.

5. Drake and Patriotic Piracy

While plot after plot was made and unmasked in England, English seamen were increasingly taking the law into their own hands ; they would have forced Philip of Spain into war in mere self-defence even if he had been driven by no other motives.

Piracy in the Channel.—Even in the earlier period of the reign, piracy had become rampant in the English Channel ; in these later years it had passed all bounds. Thus in 1568 a fleet of Spanish vessels, laden with gold borrowed from the Genoese for the use of the army in the Netherlands, was driven by the pirates to take refuge in Southampton. Elizabeth had the gold removed to the Tower of London "for safety" ; and kept it—transferring the loan to her own name, and using it to fight the Northern Earls, for whose aid it may have been intended. During the next four years Dutch rebels from the Netherlands, known as the Beggars of the Sea, were preying on Spanish trade : they were given hospitality in English harbours, and worked in the closest harmony with the English pirates. In 1572, indeed, Elizabeth did at last agree to order them away. But she knew what she was doing : they descended upon Brill, and the *seizure of Brill* was the beginning of the final Dutch revolt, which Philip II was never able to crush. Philip had need to be a patient man to pretend peace after this.

Drake's Voyages.—But this was not the worst. During these same years, English sailors were daring to venture into the innermost penetralia of the Spanish empire, seizing treasure-ships and sacking towns. The greatest hero of these exploits was Francis Drake,* whose name became a terror throughout the New World, and in Spain itself. In 1572 he raided the West Indies, landed on the Isthmus of Panama, intercepted the treasure from Peru, and stopped and searched over two hundred vessels in the Caribbean Sea. In December, 1577, he set forth upon a yet more daring adventure, with the secret backing of the queen. Though accident reduced his squadron to a single vessel of one hundred tons—the *Golden Hind*—he made his way through the Straits of Magellan into the reserved waters of the Pacific, sailed up the coast of Chile, seizing towns and ballasting his ship with treasure, explored the coast northwards as far as California, and then set forth homewards by the Cape of Good Hope, circumnavigating the World.† He had explored the secrets of the Spanish empire, and all the might of Spain had been impotent to check him. When he reached England in the Autumn of 1580, laden with treasure valued at £800,000, Elizabeth herself went down to the *Golden Hind*, and with her own hand knighted "the master thief of the unknown world."

This was the year in which Philip doubled his wealth by conquering Portugal and adding her rich empire to his own. It was impossible that he should tolerate such defiance. And if he delayed, or preferred for a time the instrument of the assassin's knife, it was only because it was more convenient to wait. But in 1585 the moment seemed to have come. William of Orange had been got rid of, and the resistance of the Netherlands was manifestly weakening. The time for delays was past; the time for open war had come.

* There is an excellent short Life of Drake by Julian Corbett (English Men of Action). Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* renders the spirit of all these adventures.

† See School Atlas, Plate 43*a*.

CHAPTER XVII

THE WAR WITH SPAIN AND THE CONQUEST OF IRELAND (1585–1603)

1. The Beginning of the War and the Spanish Armada

Character of the War.—The war with Spain, which began without a declaration in 1585 and lasted until 1604, was the first of four great wars which have formed landmarks in the history of the British peoples. Each was fought against a powerful enemy who threatened to dominate Europe and the World — Philip II, Louis XIV, Napoleon, and the German Empire. Each ended in a victory which was as important for the world as for the British peoples. Each was accompanied by tragic events in Ireland. In each British sea-power was the determining factor. Elizabeth's war against Spain was the most purely naval war of the series. It was, indeed, the first war in modern history which demonstrated the extraordinary potency of sea-power. It fixed the direction of British policy throughout the modern era. It triumphantly proved the soundness of the doctrine which Lord Herbert of Cherbury had vainly tried to impress upon Henry VIII—that the path of England lay across the seas.

The Power of Philip II.—In the eyes of contemporaries it seemed hopeless for England to resist the might of Spain. Philip's armies were the finest in Europe ; England had no army at all, save the untrained and ill-equipped levies of the shires ; and if once a Spanish army could be landed in England, it seemed that no resistance would be possible. And Philip's navies, also, were the greatest in the world. He had beaten the terrible naval strength of the Turks at Lepanto in 1571. He had at his command all the trained sailors of Italy, of Spain, and (since 1580) of Portugal, who had carried out the exploration of the world ; he had great galleys, propelled by slaves at the oar, and independent of the winds ; he had all the proud ships which plied across the Atlantic, and brought the wealth of America and India to Europe. And he commanded what seemed the inexhaustible wealth provided by the mines of the new world and the trade of the golden East.

The Strength of England.—Contemporary opinion had not

yet realised that, in the irregular piratical warfare of the last generation, English seamen had worked out new methods of naval warfare which made Philip's great armaments obsolete. They had developed types of ships which manœuvred far more quickly than the top-heavy great-ships of Spain. While Spanish practice still clung to the old theory that the fighting should be done by soldiers (who were often sea-sick), and that the sailors were an inferior class whose business was merely to bring the ships within fighting distance, the English pirates had learnt to use their crews indifferently for navigation and for fighting. The Spaniards still mounted their guns high on the great structures of poop and forecastle, and, as their tactics were to board and fight at close quarters, they did not carry heavy guns and paid little attention to marksmanship. The English had learnt to trust to their guns, and they mounted them in broadsides, nearer the level of the sea, so that their aim was concentrated, and less disturbed by the motion of the waves. It was these practices, learnt in the period of piracy, which had made Drake irresistible in the West Indies ; and these practices ensured an English victory in any sea-war. The English sailors knew their own superiority in the tactics of the sea, though neither the politicians at home nor foreign observers had fully realised it.

Drake in the West Indies.—It was fitting that the first open act of war should have been a naval expedition which set forth under Drake in September 1585—two ships of the line and thirteen cruisers, carrying 2,300 men, sent out to demonstrate the real weakness of Spain. They sacked Vigo, in Spain itself, and Santiago, the capital of the Cape Verde islands ; they captured San Domingo, the capital of the Spanish West Indies, and Cartagena on the mainland of South America, holding them to ransom ; they missed the treasure-fleet by a few hours, and destroyed a Spanish settlement in Florida on the way home.* The Spanish power was impotent to resist them. This expedition ought to have opened the eyes of the world. But it happened too far away.

The European Situation. — Meanwhile the situation had become critical in Europe. In France the death of the heir-apparent had left Henry of Navarre, the leader of the Protestants, as heir to the crown.† The irreconcilable French Catholics, led by the Duke

* See School Atlas, Plate 48*a*.

† There is a short Life of Henry of Navarre by P. F. Willert (Heroes of the Nations).

of Guise, made an alliance with Philip to prevent the succession of a Protestant; and the last and fiercest period of the French wars of religion began (1585). This meant that France would do nothing to impede a Spanish attack on England. In the Netherlands William of Orange had been assassinated (1584); Philip's general, the Duke of Parma, had reconquered the southern provinces; and the coast facing England (from which an invasion seemed easy) was securely in Philip's hands.

Leicester in the Netherlands.—The Dutch, thinking their plight desperate, offered the sovereignty of the Netherlands to Elizabeth. As was her wont, she hesitated and delayed, and tried to keep negotiations going with Parma. But she finally agreed to send over her favourite, the Earl of Leicester, with an army of 5,000 men. From December, 1585, to December, 1587, Leicester was responsible for the Dutch campaign. He was not a good leader; he quarrelled with his own captains and with the Dutch, and could not check the advance of Parma. His expedition is only memorable because, in a fight at *Zutphen*, his nephew, Sir Philip Sidney, the chivalrous poet, met his death, and in dying did an unforgotten thing, when he insisted that the cup of water for which he thirsted should be given to a soldier whose need was greater. It may be that Leicester's campaign helped to save the Netherlands. But the real salvation of the Netherlands, of England, and of Protestantism was to be won elsewhere—on the seas.

The Great Armada.—For Philip had now abandoned the idea that the Netherlands must first be subdued, and had decided that the ruin of England was the first essential. Already the Great Armada * was designed, and an elaborate campaign had been planned with Parma, who was getting ready a swarm of boats (like Napoleon more than two centuries later) to ferry an irresistible army from the Flemish shore to England, under the protection of an irresistible fleet. This huge Armada was already in preparation when the news of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots, who had bequeathed her claims to Philip, gave an additional motive for energy.

Drake at Cadiz.—The Armada was to have sailed in the summer of 1587. But in April of that year Drake, with a large fleet, forced his way into Cadiz harbour and destroyed the shipping

* Hale's *Story of the Great Armada* is a good account; there is a cheap edition.

that was being fitted out there ; he also captured twenty-four supply ships outside, and a great East Indiaman with a priceless cargo. This daring raid (which Drake described as "singeing the king of Spain's beard") postponed the attack for a year ; and the inability of the Spaniards to repel it was an ominous indication of what was coming. During this year of delay the Armada lost its able commander, Santa Cruz, and his successor, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, had no recommendation save his high rank. Undue deference for rank, indeed, halved the efficiency of the Spaniards : all their great ships had grandees in command.

The Rival Fleets.—Meanwhile England was in a fever of preparation. The militia was embodied, and volunteer levies were raised ; but they could have done nothing against the 30,000 veterans whom Parma had ready to ferry over, if once a landing had been made. Everything depended upon the ships. The nucleus of the English fleet consisted of 34 ships of the Royal Navy. These were supported by about 160 private ships, some of them under famous captains versed in sea-war, but the great majority were tiny vessels of little fighting value. They carried 15,000 men. This compared with 130 ships of the Spanish fleet, manned by 27,000 men. The Spanish ships were on the average much the larger ; but the English ships were much better gunned, and far better supplied with ammunition. The supreme command on the English side was given to Lord Howard of Effingham, a patriotic Catholic. This was due to deference to the claims of rank, but Howard, unlike Medina Sidonia, had naval experience ; his second-in-command was Drake ; he was aided by other experienced sailors such as Hawkins and Frobisher, and the captains of the individual ships were nearly all professional sailors.

The Ruin of the Armada.—The Great Armada set sail in May, but was scattered by a storm and had to put back to refit. Drake was eager to attack it in Spanish waters. He was overruled, and when, on July 19th, a southerly wind brought the Spaniards in sight of the coast of Devon, the main English fleet lay in Plymouth harbour, while a smaller squadron watched the Straits of Dover. The fleet had to be warped out of harbour ; and then began a long running fight up the Channel, which lasted for a week (July 20th–26th). Avoiding close quarters, the English strove to shepherd the enemy away from the coast, to harry them, to "pluck their feathers." A good deal of damage had been done, but nothing vital,

when on July 26th the Armada reached its destination, and anchored in Calais roads. What next? Parma—hard pressed by the Dutch, who saw the necessity of co-operation—told Medina Sidonia that he was not prepared to move until the sea had been cleared of hostile ships. But on the 28th, before the unhappy Medina Sidonia could consider how this task was to be accomplished, the English sent fireships drifting among the anchored Spanish vessels, which in panic cut their cables and beat out to sea. Next day, off *Gravelines*, the

FIG. 18.—The English Channel.

one pitched battle of the campaign was fought, and fought so furiously that the English ammunition was almost exhausted. The Spanish fleet was badly handled; it did not know how to deal with this sort of fighting, being trained to fight at close quarters by boarding; it was being driven by the English upon the sandbanks. Four ships were sunk; others were driven ashore. The only escape from disaster was to break away northwards, pursued by the English, who were able to do little damage for want of ammunition. Fierce gales sprang up, making return impossible, and there was nothing for it but to sail north about, round Scotland and Ireland. Nineteen ships

were wrecked off the Scottish and Irish coasts; thirty-five more disappeared, unaccounted for; a final storm in the Bay of Biscay left only a battered fragment to return to Spain. On the English side not a single ship had been lost. Moralists and fervent Protestants attributed this disaster to the intervention of Heaven: *Flavit Deus et dissipati sunt.* But if the winds destroyed the Great Armada, it had previously been defeated by the superior gunnery and seamanship of the English sailors.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada was one of the decisive events of history. It did not merely destroy the prestige of Spain on sea, and lay the foundations of British naval supremacy. It opened the roads of the sea to all the world, and put an end to the era of Spanish monopoly. It made possible the great colonising activities of the next era, in which all the peoples of western Europe shared. It secured the independence of the Netherlands, because it was now impossible for Spain to use the sea-route freely for the reinforcement of her armies. It put an end to the fear of Spanish domination in Europe, and of the extirpation of Protestantism.

2. The Later Phases of the War

Alliance with France and the Dutch.—Although the defeat of the Armada was decisive, it did not appear so in the eyes of contemporaries, and it was rather the beginning than the end of the struggle, which went on throughout the remainder of Elizabeth's reign. But the war now changed its character. It became almost a combined enterprise of the Dutch, the French Protestants and the English. English troops still served for some years in Holland, where Maurice, son of William of Orange, was winning a series of successes that in a few years secured the independence of the United Provinces. English troops were also sent to the help of Henry of Navarre, who became King of France as Henry IV in 1589; and from that moment, though the French civil war went on for another six years, the cause of the Catholic League, to which Philip II had given his protection, was doomed. In 1595, being now fully master of France, Henry IV declared war against Spain, and concluded a formal alliance with Elizabeth and with the Dutch (1596), which lasted until the Franco-Spanish war was concluded by the Treaty of Vervins (1598). Neither Elizabeth nor the Dutch took part in this treaty: they were pursuing the war at sea, to some extent in partnership, and the Dutch were showing even greater energy than the

English in opening out new avenues of trade to East and West, at the expense of Spain.

Episodes of the War.—It is needless to trace in detail the disconnected episodes of this long struggle. There were few great achievements; partly because there was no clear plan of campaign, one party in the Council being anxious to concentrate their attention upon the war in Europe, while another was eager to overthrow the Spanish oversea empire; but partly also because the Spaniards had learnt the lesson of the Armada, and altered their tactics. In 1589 a joint English and Dutch enterprise tried to bring the war nearer home to Spain by raising a revolt in subjugated Portugal, but they had no success. In the same year the Earl of Cumberland led a brilliant attack against the Azores; but when in 1591 a new expedition to the Azores set forth, it had to retreat before a superior Spanish force. This was the occasion on which Sir Richard Grenville refused to obey the order to retreat, and fought fifteen Spanish men-of-war for fifteen hours: * his ship, the *Revenge*, immortalised by this fight, was the only English warship captured during Elizabeth's reign. In 1595 Drake and Hawkins once more sailed to the West Indies with a big fleet, designed for conquest and plunder, but the expedition was ill-managed and achieved nothing; both Hawkins and Drake died during its course, and were buried in the waters which had so long rung with their names. In the same year Sir Walter Raleigh made an expedition to the Orinoco, in search of gold. There were, indeed, many sporadic and disconnected raids, often marked by great gallantry, and piratical attacks upon Spanish shipping went on continuously. But all this achieved very little. The age of piracy and reckless adventure was passing; and those who had won their names in it were not the men to lead the more systematic enterprises that were now needed. The most pretentious undertaking of these years was a joint English and Dutch attack on the great Spanish port of Cadiz, in 1596. The city was taken by assault and held to ransom, and a bishop's library was carried off to find a home in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. This was a demonstration of the impotence of Spain; but it had no practical value. It was the last serious operation of the war on sea, though peace was not made until after Elizabeth's death; because during the last seven years of the reign a fierce war was raging in Ireland. English forces, however,

* The subject of Tennyson's *Ballad of the Revenge*.

helped the Dutch to win a decisive victory over the Spaniards at Nieuport (1600), and took a hand in the defence of the port of Ostend.

The East India Company.—Far more important than these sporadic acts of war were the more peaceful enterprises of English sailors in waters hitherto preserved by Spain and Portugal. In 1591–1594 Sir James Lancaster led an expedition to India, broke through the Portuguese monopoly, and brought back such profits that it became obvious that this beginning should be followed up. The result was the issue of a charter to the East India Company, on December 31st, 1600; and next year Lancaster led the first "Voyage" of the Company to the Malacca Straits. Even more daring, though less fruitful, was the enterprise of William Adams, who in 1599 sailed to Japan by the Straits of Magellan; he made his home in Japan, and built that country's first navy, and he is still annually celebrated in Yeddo.

The beginning of the East India Company was the sign of the coming of a new era. It had been the work of the Elizabethan sailors to break down the barriers to oversea trade and expansion. It was to be the work of the next generation to exploit and develop these opportunities.

3. The Conquest of Ireland

One of the principal consequences of the long struggle of the Reformation was the subjugation of Ireland * by England, after so many centuries of anarchy and neglect; and the final stages of this process were directly connected with the Spanish war. The story of the conquest is one of the ugliest episodes in British history; it left a legacy of hatred from which all the British peoples have suffered. This was due to the facts that the conquest was envenomed by religious bitterness and that Ireland was used as a base of attack upon England when England's national existence was imperilled.

Henry VIII and Ireland.—Henry VIII, who had neglected Ireland almost as completely as his predecessors in the earlier part of his reign, began to take an interest in it after, and because of, his breach with the Papacy. The Pope claimed feudal suzerainty over Ireland; therefore Henry took the title of King instead of the old title of Lord of Ireland. The Pope sent emissaries to stir up the Irish chiefs against Henry (1541); they had little success, because Ireland was at this period indifferent to Rome, but Henry thought it

* School Atlas, Plate 38*b*.

wise to guard against possible dangers by making his authority more real. He found no difficulty in persuading the chiefs to share the plunder of the Irish monasteries. But his principal method was that of inducing them to adopt English instead of Irish modes of land-tenure, and distributing among those who adopted this method hereditary titles of nobility. The Irish regarded the lands of a clan as belonging to the whole clan; the English system, roughly, strove to turn the chief from a trustee into a landlord. In a great part of Leinster Henry was successful by these methods,* and these districts began to send members to the Irish Parliament. Outside Leinster he achieved little. But his conferment of the hereditary title of Earl of Tyrone upon the head of the great Ulster clan of the O'Neills led to a bitter feud, in which a younger son of the Earl—Shane O'Neill—seized the chiefdom for himself, made himself the leader of an anti-English movement, and plunged all Ulster into confusion. This ugly and savage strife began just after Henry VIII's death, and was still intermittently raging when Elizabeth came to the throne.

FIG. 19.—Tudor Ireland.

Mary's Plantation.—Under Edward VI there was a sudden outburst among the O'Connors and O'Mores of western Leinster. It was cruelly suppressed, and under Mary the whole area was resettled on English modes of land-tenure: the area affected is indicated by the names of King's County and Queen's County, with their capitals of Philipstown and Maryborough.* The unrest and alarm caused by this violent dispossession was a source of trouble for the rest of the century; whenever there was any disturbance, the O'Connors and the O'Mores were always in it.

* School Atlas, Plate 38*c*.

Rise of Catholic Fervour.—Thus far the religious question had had very little influence in Ireland; it was the land question which was the bone of contention. The breach with Rome had caused little difficulty. But when Elizabeth's government tried to force upon the Irish not merely Protestantism but the service-book in English, which was a foreign tongue to nine-tenths of the people, the results were very different. Loyalty to the Catholic faith began to be associated with patriotism. In 1561, almost at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, Catholic emissaries—chief among them David Wolfe—began to work in southern Ireland, where the Papacy saw a chance of striking a blow against the heretic queen. These emissaries received a very different welcome from their predecessors twenty years before. They aroused a real religious revival, especially in Munster; from the first it was associated with enmity to England; and the more these feelings grew, the more dangerous Ireland became to England. Throughout the whole of Elizabeth's reign trouble never ceased in Ireland. What made the situation worse was that Elizabeth was never able to afford the cost of an army sufficiently strong to enforce order, with the result that the over-strained troops fought with the cruelty that is born of fear.

O'Neill and Desmond.—In the first period of Elizabeth's reign (1558–1568) two distinct sources of trouble vexed the government. In the north the turbulent Shane O'Neill was never at rest, and was reported to be intriguing with Philip II; and the English armies sent to deal with him were never strong enough. All Ulster was in a state of chaos until Shane's death in 1567. In the south there was a fierce feud between the two great Anglo-Norman houses of Munster, the Butlers of Ormond and the Fitzgeralds of Desmond. In 1567 Desmond was sent to London, with a charge of treason hanging over his head, and forced to surrender his lands, grants from which were made to various English adventurers. This was the cause of much trouble in the future.

The Munster Risings.—In the second period of the reign (1568–1585), when an uneasy peace covered a growing hostility between England and Spain, there were formidable troubles in Ireland, which were unquestionably fomented by Spain. In 1569 a very dangerous revolt broke out all over Munster, stimulated by religious zeal and by anger at the grants of land to Englishmen; it was led by James Fitzmaurice, cousin of the Earl of Desmond. For four miserable years a hideous war raged, in which no quarter was

given on either side. Even when the revolt was crushed, after the country had been devastated, English officers reported that a general insurrection would take place if a foreign force were to land. There was bitter slaughter also in Connaught, in 1577; and there was intermittent trouble in Ulster. In 1579 revolt broke out afresh; and this time it was aided by a foreign force which Fitzmaurice had raised abroad. Even the Pale rose in revolt; and a small Spanish army landed in Kerry and entrenched itself at *Smerwick* (1580). The inadequate English forces had to fight desperately to hold their own, and they showed no mercy, "consuming with fire all habitations, and executing the people wherever we found them." The Spaniards at Smerwick were forced to surrender, and were all put to the sword. By 1584 Munster had been turned into a desert; but a sort of peace was restored. Then an English colony was planted in the desolated province. Among those who received grants of land were Sir Walter Raleigh and Edmund Spenser. But these settlers were never happy in their new homes, and in course of time the Irish drifted back, and Munster became as Irish as before.

Tyrone's National Rebellion.—There was an interval of uneasy peace for ten years after 1584, during the first years of open war with Spain; the defeat of the Armada removed all hope of Spanish aid for a time. But in 1595 a rising more serious than any of its predecessors began; and by 1598 it had developed into a nation-wide revolt against English supremacy. The leaders of this national revolt were Hugh Earl of Tyrone, the head of the O'Neills of Ulster, and Hugh Roe O'Donnell, the chief of the rival clan of O'Donnells in Donegal. Not only Ulster but Leinster, Connaught and ruined Munster were all aflame. At the *Yellow Ford* (1598) Tyrone inflicted upon the English the heaviest defeat they had yet received. For the remaining years of Elizabeth's reign Ireland demanded the whole resources of England, and the cost of the Irish war was 30 per cent. more than the total revenue of England. In 1599 a big army of 16,000 foot and 1,300 horse was sent over under Elizabeth's favourite Essex.* He did nothing, but offered to Tyrone terms so favourable that the English government repudiated them. Essex was recalled in disgrace. The war was renewed in 1600. By desperate fighting, Essex's successor, Lord Mountjoy, broke the

* Lytton Strachey's *Elizabeth and Essex* tries to make a hero of this spoilt Adonis. On his recall, after sulking like a child, he attempted a foolish rebellion, and was executed.

back of the resistance by 1601. Then, when it was too late, news came that 5,000 Spaniards, with siege-guns, had evaded the English fleet and landed at *Kinsale*. The Spaniards were blockaded from the sea by an English squadron, which had to fight a relieving squadron sent from Spain ; on land they were beset by Mountjoy, and Tyrone vainly tried to relieve the siege. In 1602 the Spaniards capitulated, and though the war still lingered on, and Tyrone did not submit until after Elizabeth's death, the Irish revolt was in fact hopeless from 1602. After practically forty years of almost continuous fighting, generally of the most ferocious kind, Ireland was at last completely subjugated.

The Tragedy of Ireland.—The conquest was the outcome of the Reformation and of the menace from Spain. The barbarity with which it was achieved was largely due to the fact that the English forces in Ireland—mere handfuls of men, ill-supported and often ill-led—felt that they were fighting for the very existence of their own country. But the circumstances of the conquest left to the future an evil heritage, which worked like a poison throughout the next three centuries. It has been the tragic fate of Ireland that her desire for national freedom has always been stirred to activity just at those moments when it was most perilous to England—in the time of Philip II, in the time of Louis XIV, in the time of Napoleon, and in the time of William II of Germany. It has been Ireland's yet more tragic fortune that the events and the periods which have brought prosperity and advancement to her sister-nations have usually brought to her nothing but woe. Thus the sixteenth century, which was for England a period of glorious achievement, and for Scotland a period of national rebirth, was for Ireland a period of unalloyed misery and suffering.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ELIZABETHAN AGE

1. The Sudden Glory of English Poetry

The Great Literary Era.—The supreme glory of Elizabeth's reign, and its noblest contribution to the achievement of the British peoples, was the dazzling outburst of great literature, and especially

of great poetry, by which it was distinguished. There had been no English poet of distinction since Chaucer's time, two centuries before. Even under the stimulus of the Renascence, the first half of the sixteenth century had produced little or no great literature, and in the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign the Muses were still almost silent. Then, suddenly, in 1579 and the following years, the great chorus began. It swelled in volume after 1588, and was at its height when the great queen died. The poets were as prolific as they were innumerable : England had become " a nest of singing-birds." The awakening was as sudden and as thrilling as the rejoicing of the woods when the sun rises on a May morning.

Its Beginning.—A few dates will serve to bring out this remarkable phenomenon. In 1579 Spenser, that rich and lovely singer, published his first poem, the *Shepherd's Calendar ;* North published his noble translation of Plutarch's lives ; Lyly's *Euphues*, which set a new fashion in prose, was issued ; the chivalrous Sir Philip Sidney, who was so soon to die, was writing his sonnets, his *Arcadia*, and his *Defence of Poesy ;* the first English theatre, whose boards were soon to ring to so much noble verse, had just been opened by the actor Burbidge ; and the " University wits," who played so great a part in this efflorescence—Lyly and Greene and Peele and Lodge and the rest—were starting their hectic and Bohemian life in London. They were the first group of professional men of letters that England had known.

Its Apogee.—This was a noble beginning. But if we turn to the days of the Armada, and the proud and stirring times that followed, the tale is more wonderful. In 1587 that great genius, Christopher Marlowe, produced his first play ; he had written his great tragedy of *Faustus*, and ended his brief career, by 1593. In 1587 also William Shakespeare came as a country lad to make his name in London. The years between 1590 and 1595 were the first flowering-time of Shakespeare's genius : beginning with the pretty wit of *Love's Labour's Lost*, he rose in these years to *Richard II* and the *Midsummer Might's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Merchant of Venice*. Before the end of the century he had written *Julius Cæsar* and all the great English historical plays, and created Falstaff and Rosalind and Beatrice ; and before the great queen died *Hamlet* had been played (1602). Between 1590 and 1600 came nearly all the great sonnet-sequences of Drayton and Daniel and the rest ; collections of songs, often with musical settings, were appearing, never

without fresh gems ; and, to name no others, Spenser's *Faery Queene* was published in 1593, Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* and Chapman's noble *Homer* appeared in 1598, while in the field of prose the rich eloquence of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* came in 1594–1597, and the terse wisdom of Bacon's *Essays* in 1597. These are but selections from an extraordinarily prolific output. In 1579 the English language was poorer in great literature than French or Spanish, and immeasurably poorer than Italian. By 1600 it could stand comparison with the literature of any people, even the Greeks.

Patriotism and Individualism.—The reason for this amazing and sudden outburst is plain. The English people were tingling with national pride and confidence ; they saw great vistas of opportunity opening before them ; they had escaped from most of the difficulties that had harassed and occupied their fathers' minds and from many of the restraints of old custom. On every side one of the great marks of the time was the confident energy of individuals, seeking out new fields of effort. It was the bold daring of individual seamen, encouraged but not controlled by government, which had mainly broken down the Spanish power. The energy of individual merchants was expanding English trade at a remarkable pace, and English ships were seen in every harbour of northern Europe and the Mediterranean. Individual *entrepreneurs*, no longer tied down by the regulations of " misteries," were introducing many new industries. Government, by the wisdom of the system of national regulation which it had substituted for the old hide-bound system of the craft-gilds, had made this possible ; but the remarkable achievements of this age were due, not to government, but to the ebullient energy of a free people. And, in the same way, in the field of letters men were reaching out after new things, trying every kind of experiment, working out new modes of representing and criticising life.

National Pride.—Patriotism and individualism—these are the two main notes of the Elizabethan age. The nation had found itself ; and its individual citizens were glorying in new opportunities. The literature of the age was inspired by this exultant patriotism. It is everywhere perceptible—in the lovely romance of the *Faery Queene*, which is all an allegory of England and her triumphant war against the difficulties that surrounded her ; in the lofty eloquence with which Hooker sets forth the praises of the English Church ; in the intense love for English scenes and names and ways which is to be found in all the poets, but perhaps most fully

in Drayton; and, most of all, in the noble rhetoric with which Shakespeare sings the praise of England, "this happy breed of men, this little world, this precious stone set in the silver sea."

New difficulties were soon to arise—were, indeed, already emerging; and as this became more clear, it was reflected in the graver and nobler note of the poets after the turn of the century, when *Hamlet* and *The Tempest* succeeded to the *Midsummer Night's Dream.* But as yet these new problems were not in the forefront. The poets of the sixteenth century had little to say about the religious questionings of the Puritans, beyond a gay gibe flung at the "precisian" Malvolio; nor were they interested in constitutional problems—Shakespeare could write a play about King John without mentioning Magna Carta. The spirit of the Elizabethan poets was, in the main, the spirit of exultant and confident youth. In fact, they were all young: they had all been born since Elizabeth came to the throne, and this is the reason for the exaggerated veneration which they paid to the great queen. But how much richer and nobler a land they had made of their beloved England, in one short generation!

2. Puritanism and Parliament

Growth of Religious Fervour.—This free movement of thought, this adventurous questioning, was becoming, in the later period of the reign, ominously active in the sphere of religion. The gradual development of Puritanism, which challenged the Elizabethan Church settlement, and foreshadowed the troubles of the next period, was indeed one of the main features of these years. As we have seen, there had been a good deal of dissatisfaction with the incompleteness of the Reformation in the early years of the reign. Later, as the gravity of the menace from Spain became clearer, two things happened. On the one hand, the "Anglican compromise" ceased to be merely a compromise, and won the affection of the greater part of the nation. The noble forms of prayer which were used during the dread days of peril were thenceforth sanctified; Hooker found arguments to prove the essential rightness of the whole system; and a strong and sincere Church party, whose convictions were religious and not merely political, came into being. On the other hand, in those searching days the earnestness of the Puritans was deepened. They were not satisfied with formal, read services. They held meetings for mutual exhortation and preaching, called "Prophesy-

ings," and for a time Archbishop Grindal, who succeeded Parker in 1575, gave his protection to these meetings; Burghley also was in favour of letting them be. But the queen, who had no sympathy with "enthusiasm," insisted upon their suppression, and actually suspended Grindal, by a very autocratic exercise of her supremacy.

Presbyterians and Brownists.—In the middle period of the reign, indeed, there was comparatively little trouble, partly owing to the moderating influence of Grindal, partly because the "sectaries" were quiescent in the face of national peril. But in the later period of the reign the strife became acute. Cartwright of Cambridge, and other divines who wanted to see the English Church reorganised on the model of Geneva and Scotland, became more active. They had expounded their views as early as 1572 in an "Admonition to Parliament," which practically demanded the abolition of the episcopal system, and the authors of this document had been sent to gaol. In 1590 Cartwright and his friends started Associations for the organisation of Church Councils on the Presbyterian model. For this defiance of the royal supremacy they were summoned before the High Commission Court; but they had too many supporters to make it safe to deal more severely with them, and they were released on making an apology. A yet more Radical school of thought, started by Robert Browne, and called after him "the Brownists," repudiated not only royal supremacy and episcopal power, but the exercise of any sort of control over any congregation of Christians who chose to worship in their own way. These were the ancestors of the "Congregationalists," and the first advocates of religious toleration—though they would not have tolerated Roman Catholics.

Whitgift and the High Commission.—During the course of the war with Spain, "sectaries" were being put to death, equally with Roman Catholics, for denying the royal supremacy: the Anglican Church was now strong enough to persecute, and the business of enforcing uniformity was vigorously carried on from 1583 onwards by Archbishop Whitgift. Nobody has ever, in England, wielded the censorship of the Press more strictly than Whitgift did, with the High Commission Court as his instrument. Yet he could not stamp out Puritan literature altogether. In 1588 and 1589, during the crisis of the Armada, a series of vehement and acrid Puritan tracts was issued under the name of "Martin Marprelate"; they were printed at a secret press, which moved from place to place.

Elizabeth and Parliament.—It is significant that there was always a large body of opinion in Parliament favourable to Puritan ideas, which had many advocates among the country gentlemen and in the towns. This was one of the reasons why Elizabeth had as little to do with Parliament as she could, and preferred to show the most extreme parsimony rather than endure dependence on parliamentary grants. There were only thirteen sessions of Parliament in the forty-five years of her reign—an average of one every three-and-a-half years. In order to influence the membership, Elizabeth (like her Tudor predecessors) freely used her prerogative of summoning new boroughs to elect members. She added no less than sixty-two to the membership of the House of Commons ; and the boroughs she enfranchised were mostly small places, easily brought under royal influence. Her ministers took great pains with the management of Parliament. Robert Cecil, Burghley's son, made a point of being elected to the House of Commons in every Parliament, and was, indeed, the first English minister who regularly represented the Government in that House. Yet despite all these pains, Parliament was constantly troublesome, and was sometimes sharply rated by the queen for presuming to meddle with questions which she regarded as exclusively her concern. On several occasions members who thus offended were sent to prison. Peter Wentworth, who insisted upon claiming the right of free speech on matters of national importance, such as the succession to the crown, was sent to the Tower in 1587 and again in 1593 ; and on the second occasion he remained a prisoner until his death three years later. Elizabeth used her power of veto on legislation very freely : in 1598 she vetoed no less than forty-eight out of ninety-one Bills sent up to her.

Growing Independence of Parliament.—All this suggests that Parliament had little power, and that the reins of government were effectively in the queen's hands. But although this was true, it was also true that, after long being content to leave the business of government to the Crown and the Council, Parliament—and especially the House of Commons—was beginning to claim a larger share of power. If many Bills were vetoed, this meant that many Bills were sent up which were not initiated by the Government. In truth, the knights of the shire, who had obtained such a variety of administrative experience during the last century, and the prosperous merchants of the towns, who were now managing great enterprises, were plainly more competent to take a share in government than

their predecessors of the fourteenth century, and were not, like them, dominated by ambitious groups of nobles. Respect for the old queen, who had steered the country through difficult times, kept these claims within bounds; but it was plain that a difficult time was coming.

The Monopoly Dispute.—In 1597 and again in 1601 the Queen almost came to an open rupture with her parliaments. They complained bitterly of the numerous monopolies that had been granted in various articles of trade. These monopolies or patents had been used as a means of encouraging new industries, and had served a useful purpose. But in the thriving England of 1600 this method was no longer needed; moreover, it seems to have been improperly used in many cases. Anyway, in 1601 the proud queen had to accept defeat and promise to abandon most of the monopolies, though she was wise enough to give to her defeat the appearance of a willing concession.

Elizabeth's Court.—These parliamentary discussions, however, counted for little in the eyes of contemporaries. The real centre of political interest and the real field of ambition was not Parliament, but the gay and brilliant court of the great Queen, which, in old age as in youth, she very fully dominated. Careers were made or marred by her smile or frown, and the aim of all ambition was to win her favour. Throughout her reign, she loved to surround herself with chosen confidants of two distinct types—on the one hand, grave men of affairs; on the other, splendid and gallant figures who amused her leisure but were also allowed to share in the deliberations of her Council.* A wise woman of affairs, she valued her men of business, her Burghleys and her Walsinghams, and was steadfastly faithful to them; but she never allowed them to dictate, and she liked to see them bearded and rated by her gallants. A lover of dress and dancing, of pageantry and flattery and flirtation, she delighted in the worship of handsome and romantic persons like Leicester and Essex. Sometimes she let them persuade her to abandon her habitual caution, and to give them (to their own undoing) the command of great adventures, like Leicester's in the Netherlands, and Essex's at Cadiz and in Ireland. When they failed, they lost her favour. But for the most part she was staunch in her

* Lytton Strachey's *Elizabeth and Essex* gives a good idea of rivalries of Elizabeth's court, and contains a subtle study of the queen's character.

friendships, though she made her friends feel that her favour could not be taken for granted. Great men, such as Raleigh and Bacon, were not ashamed to strain every nerve in order to attract her notice. She enjoyed the feeling that there was such eager competition for her smiles. She delighted to know that her court was the heart of England and that her will determined the course of events, as it made or marred the fortunes of gallants, statesmen and poets. On the whole, she used her power well. No sovereign ever gave more constant or discriminating support to a statesman than Elizabeth gave to Burghley, who kept her confidence from the first day of her reign till his death, though he was often exasperated by the favour she showed to the flashy Leicester. And Burghley's son, the silent and supple Robert Cecil (later Earl of Salisbury) succeeded to his power, as Leicester's nephew Essex took his uncle's place as reigning favourite. Between Cecil and Essex a fiercer rivalry raged than had ever divided Burghley and Leicester. In the end, having failed in Ireland, the spoilt darling, Essex, lost control of himself, was betrayed into the folly of a futile rebellion, and suffered on the block. It was Cecil who brought about the peaceful succession of James I, and became the indispensable minister at the beginning of the new reign.

Death of Elizabeth.—Thus, to the end, the personality of Elizabeth was the dominant factor in English politics, and her will was decisive. There were signs, as we have seen, that a new era was dawning in which the personal sovereignty that the Tudors had so royally wielded would no longer be needed, and in which the nation would again attempt, in more favourable circumstances, the great experiment of parliamentary government which had failed so disastrously in the fifteenth century. But Elizabeth died before that great issue was definitely raised. She left it as a heritage to her successor, who lacked the prestige that her long and glorious reign had given her. She died at a happy moment, when her fame was at its highest. She had found the nation divided and imperilled; she left it united and triumphant. It was a just claim that she had made to her Parliament in 1601, when they were reconciled after the monopoly quarrel: "This I count the glory of my crown, that I have reigned with your loves. . . . I was never so much enticed with the royal authority of a queen as delighted that God had made me His instrument . . . to defend this kingdom from peril, dishonour, tyranny, and oppression."

With her ended the long ages of island-history, in a blaze of glory. A yet greater career, on a wider stage, was about to open for the British peoples.

Retrospect and Prospect.—A little reflection upon the greatness of the changes which had come about during the sixteenth century is enough to show how the islands, and especially England, had been prepared for the great part they were to play in the new era. In England feudal turbulence had been finally mastered, and the warlike and backward areas of the North and West had been assimilated with the rest of the country. In Ireland the tribal system had been destroyed, though in a very cruel way which brought many evils in the future. In Scotland, though feudal power in the Lowlands and tribal power in the Highlands were still strong, the nation's spirit, expressed in its new Church system, promised to conquer both. Two profound revolutions had been undergone, not without many difficulties, but (on the whole) with less friction than in other countries. The first was the great religious change which, both in England and in Scotland, had turned the Church into a national institution, and raised deep problems which profoundly stirred men's minds. The second was the great economic change, whereby the shackles of mediæval ways were discarded, both in agriculture and in industry, and the era of free individual enterprise was opened. Thanks to the wise guidance of Burghley and Elizabeth, this change had been more completely and more peacefully effected in England than in any other European country. Finally, the ambitions of European conquest, which had haunted the rulers of England since the Norman Conquest, had been abandoned. The English had at last become a sea-faring race, and the strength of England now rested, as all the world could see, upon Sea Power. It was towards the world across the sea that the ambitions and enterprises of the English now chiefly turned : they had begun to be a trading as well as a sea-faring people. The sixteenth century had fixed the lines of their future destiny. They were now a united nation, the freest in the world. The expansion of their freedom at home, and the expansion of their activities over-sea, were to be henceforward the great features of their history.

Supplementary Reading on Book III

The Third Book of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* covers, more fully, the ground covered in this Book; the chapters on foreign policy, on Scotland, on Ireland, on the seamen, and especially the last chapter on the Elizabethan Age, add a good deal. There is much that is vivid and stimulating in Green's pages on this period (303–459), and in Trevelyan's *History of England* (267–374). For more detailed study, two volumes of Longmans' *Political History of England*—that by H. A. L. Fisher (1485–1547) and that by A. F. Pollard (1547–1603), will be found most useful. Period III of Maitland's *English Constitutional History* gives an excellent account of the constitutional history of the period (pp. 226–280). See also Keatinge and Fraser's *Documents of British History*. The earlier chapters in A. F. Pollard's *Factors in Modern History* deal suggestively with aspects of the period. Warner's *Landmarks of Economic History* is helpful on the economic side, also the *Piers Plowman Histories* (Book IV by Niemeyer and Wragge). There are some good chapters in Lord Acton's *Lectures on Modern History*. Payne's *Selections from Elizabethan Voyages* gives some thrilling narratives taken from Hakluyt; and Jacobs' *Geographical Discovery* deals in a succinct and interesting way with the course of exploration. Froude's great book deals with this period; and although it is wrong-headed and untrustworthy, its narrative style is so admirable that some selections from it should be read— especially on the reign of Elizabeth.

BOOK IV

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

(1603–1688)

FIG. 20.—European Colonies in North America to 1650.

BOOK IV

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONFLICT AND OVERSEA EXPANSION (1603–1688)

In three main respects, the seventeenth century was an era of profound significance in the history of the British peoples.

In the first place, all the island-nations were now for the first time brought effectively under a single government. Wales had been incorporated with England in 1536; Ireland had been cruelly conquered by Elizabeth; and in 1603 the English and Scottish crowns were united by the accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England. Scotland and Ireland still remained, indeed, separate realms. But the history of the three countries was throughout the century so closely intertwined, and their reactions upon one another were so profound, that their story became one.

In the second place, after a long and difficult struggle in which political and religious differences were blended, the system of parliamentary supremacy, which had been tried and had failed under the Lancastrians, was re-established upon a sounder basis. This achievement was the more remarkable because in the other countries of Western Europe the system of Estates (from which Parliament sprang) finally broke down in this century. Almost everywhere absolute monarchy was established, and there was a universal belief that it alone could give firm and efficient government. In the British lands alone a system of representative self-government was successfully established, and these lands stood forth before the world as the models and exemplars of political liberty. This was to be their most characteristic note; in this respect they led the way for the world.

Finally, it was in this period that the astonishing achievement of planting young British nations in the unoccupied lands of

the earth, and of establishing British influence among the ancient peoples of the tropics, really began; and the distinctive features which were to mark British expansion and to explain its success were defined. The most important of these was the extension to new lands of the habits and institutions of self-government. Thus the

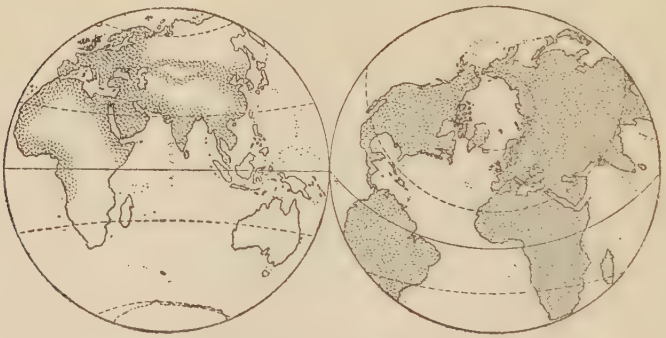

FIG. 21.—Britain before and after the Age of Discovery.

political controversy which raged in the Islands was of vital importance not for them alone but for the daughter-nations which were to spring from them.

CHAPTER XIX

JAMES I: A PERIOD OF BEGINNINGS (1603–1625)

1. JAMES I AND THE UNION OF THE CROWNS

The "Main" and "Bye" Plots.—Throughout the reign of Elizabeth, and especially in her last years, there had been constant nervousness as to what would happen when the great queen died. A disputed succession might involve the undoing of all the work of consolidation which she had achieved. The peaceful succession of James I, and the fact that he promptly gave his confidence to the dead queen's chief minister, Robert Cecil, son of the great Burghley, put an end to these fears. But certain obscure plots which were

unmasked in the first months of the reign showed that the fears had not been groundless. One was a plot in which a Roman Catholic priest was engaged in a strange partnership with a Puritan peer and others. They apparently intended to seize the king's person, but their objects were not clear. Behind this "Bye" plot, as it was called, the government suspected the existence of a "Main" plot, in which Lord Cobham and Sir Walter Raleigh, among others, were said to be implicated. Its object was said to be to put Arabella Stuart, the king's cousin,* on the throne; possibly its real object was the overthrow of Cecil. The whole business is obscure. But Raleigh, the last of the great Elizabethan adventurers, was sentenced to death for high treason, and, being excused the death penalty, was imprisoned in the Tower of London, where he remained for fourteen years—using his enforced leisure to write a history of the world.

Gunpowder Plot.—Two years later a yet more fantastic conspiracy was formed by a group of fanatical Catholics, disappointed that James had not granted the toleration they expected. Its leading spirit was Robert Catesby, a Warwickshire gentleman; while Garnet, head of the English Jesuits, was in touch with it. The plan was to blow up the Houses of Parliament at the opening of the session, when the king and all the leading men could be disposed of at one blow. Under the cover of the confusion there was to be a Catholic revolt in the midlands. The explosion was entrusted to Guy Fawkes, who had served in the Spanish army. The plot was discovered in time; Garnet and Fawkes were tortured and executed; Catesby and some of his friends tried to put up a fight, but were easily disposed of. This plot, which was as foolish as it was diabolical, put an end for a long time to any chance of toleration for the Catholics.

Character of James I.—James I of England and VI of Scotland, whose position on the English throne was thus secured, was a man of thirty-seven.† His youth and early manhood had been full of troubles. He had suffered many things from the turbulent nobles of Scotland, and from the browbeating ministers of the Kirk, and had envied from a distance the wealth and power of Elizabeth. Until the last moment, he had never been sure of the succession to the English crown, and when it came so easily, it seemed like a

* See Genealogical Table B, at the end of the volume.

† There is a good portrait of James I in Scott's *Fortunes of Nigel.*

divine endorsement of hereditary right. James was a man of ability and learning. He had been trained by the great scholar George Buchanan. He could write forcibly, and had a pungent wit. He would have made an excellent professor. He was vain, fussy, pedantic, and physically a coward, though fond of manly sports. He was a man of large ideas, in some respects in advance of his time. He strongly shared the current political doctrines of the Divine Right of Kings, but he lacked Elizabeth's shrewd sense of what was practical. It was his intention to follow Elizabeth's policy in Church and State ; and having no understanding of England, he was quite unable to see that Elizabeth's policy was becoming every year more difficult to pursue. In two respects, however, he was ready for new departures. He was a genuine lover of peace, eager to bring to an end the dragging war with Spain, and to use the influence of England as a means of maintaining peace in Europe. And he realised, to some extent, the magnitude of the opportunity presented by the fact that he was the first king of the whole of the British Islands. As a sign of this, he was the first to use the title " King of Great Britain."

James's Scottish Policy.—James would have liked to bring about a complete union between England and Scotland. But neither the English nor the Scots were ready for this. The English Parliament would not even agree (1607) to freedom of trade and an interchange of citizenship between the two countries ; and the only satisfaction which the king obtained was an award of the judges that Scottish children born after his accession to the English throne (*post-nati*) were citizens of both countries. Nevertheless his new position made a vast difference to the government of Scotland. He was no longer the plaything of rebellious nobles and exacting presbyters. He was able to make himself practically an absolute monarch in Scotland, ruling his northern realm through a nominated Privy Council ; and as he also secured the nomination of the Lords of the Articles (who controlled the procedure of the Scottish Parliament), no opposition was to be feared from that quarter. He brought to an end the turbulence and disorder of the Scottish border, and was able in some degree to tame the Highland chieftains : the robber clan McGregor was proscribed. Even the Kirk was brought into subjection. James avoided meetings of the dangerous General Assembly, which could be as troublesome in Scotland as Parliament in England. He succeeded in establishing a number of bishops, who were modestly endowed with Church lands held by the crown ; and

in 1610, at a packed General Assembly, he got an agreement that his bishops should be the permanent presidents of district Synods, that they should ordain ministers, and that no General Assemblies or Synods should be held without his assent. Finally, in 1618, he obtained a reluctant assent to the Five Articles of Perth, which introduced into Scotland some of the ceremonies used in England. In short, he took substantial steps towards the assimilation of the Scottish to the English Church. These changes were deeply resented in Scotland; but the resentment did not break forth until the next reign. Such were the results of the new power which the King of Scotland drew from England. For the first time the age-long anarchy of Scotland was tamed. "By a clerk of the Council I govern Scotland now," James could boast, "which others could not do by the sword."

The Plantation of Ulster.—In Ireland also the omens were favourable for a fresh start. Tyrone, the leader of the national rising which had kept the country aflame for a quarter of a century,* made his submission in 1604. A policy of pacification might now have had good chances of success. Unfortunately the cruel tradition of the Elizabethan period, and the belief that Ireland could only thrive if the Irish "savages" were replaced by English settlers, still survived. In 1607, after disputes with some of his tenantry, Tyrone fled the country, and with him went the chief of the O'Donnells of Donegal and the chief of the Maguires of Fermanagh. Whether they fled (as the English believed) because they had been engaged in another abortive conspiracy, or because they thought they were going to be attacked, it is not possible to say. But their flight was made the excuse for a confiscation of the lands of seven Ulster counties,† though most of the owners had had nothing to do with the conspiracy, even if there was one. Small reserves were set apart for the Irish; and all the best lands were allotted to English and Scottish settlers (1608). To the city of London were given the town of Derry and county of Coleraine, both henceforth known as "Londonderry."

Effects of the Plantation.—This was the most permanent and successful of all the "plantations" that had been made in Ireland, mainly because a majority of the settlers were not absentee grantees but tenacious, thrifty and industrious Scots who made their homes on

* See above, Book III, p. 222.

† School Atlas, Plate 38*c*.

their lands. Ulster, hitherto the most untameable part of Ireland, became an English-speaking enclave, a garrison in Celtic Ireland. But as the Scots brought with them their Presbyterian organisation and practices, there was always a cleavage between them and the English settlers in southern Ireland. The disunity of Ireland had been made more acute. Similar settlements, of a less drastic kind, were later made in Wexford, Longford, and elsewhere. These confiscations destroyed any hope there might have been that the Irish would settle down with a sense of security and a belief that they would get just treatment. In 1611 the Irish Parliament was summoned to ratify the Ulster Plantation. But it was "packed" by the creation of thirty-nine new parliamentary boroughs, returning seventy-eight members, who were elected solely by the Protestant corporations of the boroughs. Although this Parliament included Catholics and passed an Act which removed all legal distinctions between the two races, it embodied and expressed the ascendancy of the small Protestant minority. This was not a happy beginning for the union of the nations, which had been so recently and so cruelly brought about.

Neither in Scotland nor in Ireland were the first results of the new regime satisfactory. In both there was too little recognition of national needs and sentiments. Both, therefore, were to be sources of great difficulty in the troubled times that were coming.

2. Peace Abroad and the Beginnings of Expansion

A Policy of Peace.—Almost the first act of the new king was to make peace with Spain (1604). The treaty of peace restored trade relations between the two countries, but it gave no definite answer to the vital question of the right of access for English traders to the Spanish dominions in the New World. This was characteristic of James's blindness to the importance of oversea developments. His eyes were fixed upon Europe. Pursuing a generally pacific policy, he strove to keep on good terms with France as well as Spain, and he formed a link with the German Protestants when (1613) he married his daughter Elizabeth to the Elector Palatine,* the leader of the more extreme or Calvinistic Protestants of Germany, who had

* From this marriage all the English sovereigns since George I are descended. See Genealogical Table C, at the end of the volume.

formed a Union of Protestant princes in 1608. His idea was to use the weight of England as a means of keeping the peace of Europe. But his pacific disposition, and his need of money, led him seriously to neglect the navy, upon which the prestige and strength of England depended; and the consequence was that, when a new crisis came, England counted for very little.

Rivalry for Oversea Trade.—James's European pacifism, and his neglect of the navy, had other consequences. It gravely weakened England in the keen rivalry, which was now beginning, to exploit the opportunities for oversea trade and expansion presented by the overthrow of the Spanish monopoly. The mere fact that the English were now at peace with Spain, and could not attack Spanish lands or ships, while the Dutch, still at war, were free to attack wherever they liked, gave to the Dutch a very great advantage, and largely explains the extraordinarily rapid development of Dutch oversea power which took place during this period. Moreover, the oversea enterprises of the Dutch had the full support of their home government, and the two powerful companies which took charge of them (the Company of the East Indies and the Company of the West Indies) were practically national enterprises.

Lack of Government Support.—English enterprise, on the other hand, received little or no government backing. When English merchants complained that their ships were attacked by Spanish or Portuguese or Dutch ships, James replied that if they chose to undertake dangerous adventures in distant seas, they must do so at their own risk. The failure of the Stewart monarchy to give help and protection to oversea enterprise was one of the reasons why the trading-classes took the parliamentarian side in the coming conflict. It was therefore by the private energy of individuals and organised groups that the English part in the development of oversea trade and settlement was played in this period: little help came from the government, and little protection from the navy.

The Massacre of Amboina.—One such group was the East India Company, which was engaged in getting a foothold in the eastern trade, at first in friendly partnership with the Dutch, but ere long in acute rivalry. The most lucrative branch of this trade was that with the Spice Islands in the Malay Archipelago, which yielded immense profits.* Here the well-organised Dutch company

* School Atlas, Plate 43*a*.

showed so much energy in overcoming Portuguese opposition and in planting forts and factories in the islands that they presently saw no reason why they should share their advantages with the English. James I tried to patch up an agreement with the Dutch in 1619; but as it was clear that he would not back his demands by force, negotiation was of no avail. Soon there was open conflict between the former allies in this field; and in 1623 the Dutch arrested a group of English traders in the island of Amboina, and put twelve of them to death. This episode, which was known as the Massacre of Amboina, practically put an end to English trade in the Spice Islands. James made no serious attempt to get amends for the massacre, and it was not until the time of Cromwell that any amends were made.

The English in India.—Meanwhile, however, the English had won a foothold on the mainland of India.* James sent an ambassador, in 1615, to the court of Jehangir, the Mogul Emperor at Delhi, to ask for trading privileges. But again mere negotiation was of little avail: Jehangir replied that the Portuguese controlled the trade with Europe. The English trading squadrons therefore had to fight the Portuguese for a foothold. In 1612 and again in 1614 they won two resounding victories over overwhelmingly superior Portuguese forces off *Surat*—then the principal trade-outlet for Northern India. The consequence was that in 1616 they were licensed to open a factory at Surat. This first English settlement in India was a quadrangular house, the basement of which was used for storage, while agents of the Company lived above, spending their time (between "voyages") in selling the goods imported from England and collecting Indian goods for the homeward cargoes. This was the beginning of the momentous connection between England and India. Trade with India gradually grew during James I's reign. But it was far behind that of the Dutch, who had several factories in India, and were winning control over Ceylon, besides dominating the Far Eastern trade.

The West Indies.—In the West also this was a period of beginnings. The West Indies† were haunted by "buccaneers," English, French, and Dutch, who carried on the lawless traditions of the previous period, and preyed upon Spanish shipping. They

* See School Atlas, Plate 53*a*; also the larger Atlas, Plate 30*a*.
† School Atlas, Plate 48*a*.

also engaged in a smuggling trade with the Spanish dominions, especially dealing in slaves brought from West Africa; but in this traffic the Dutch had, as yet, the upper hand.

Raleigh and Eldorado.—One characteristic enterprise was organised by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1617. As a means of escaping from the Tower, he offered to go in search of a gold-mine he knew of in Eldorado, up the Orinoco River, and was allowed to go on condition that he did not invade Spanish territory or fight the Spaniards. He inevitably came into conflict with the Spaniards, and returned from what may be described as the last of the Elizabethan adventures, bringing no gold. The Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, who now had great influence at the English court, demanded that Raleigh should be handed over for punishment in Spain. James could not descend quite so low as this; nevertheless, he had Raleigh executed (1618) on the old charge of treason for which he had been imprisoned since 1603. The contrast between this treatment of a famous and gallant man and Elizabeth's treatment of Drake showed how times had changed.

West Indian Colonies.—It was not until the end of the reign that settlement began in the West Indies. In 1623 a settlement was made in the empty island of *St. Christopher*, and in 1625 a more important one on the fertile island of *Barbados*, where English ships had been fitting and watering since 1605. The English colonisation of the West Indies had begun.

North American Settlements.—Far more important were the settlements which were meanwhile being made on the coast of North America.* In these enterprises, as in the piracy of the West Indies, English, French, and Dutch alike took part. The French, led by the great explorer Champlain, began the history of Canada by planting settlements at Port Royal in Acadia (Nova Scotia) in 1604, and at Quebec, on the St. Lawrence River, in 1608; and in the following years Champlain's daring explorations marked out a great part of the Great Lakes. The Dutch, with their shrewd commercial instinct, found their way to the best trading position on the continent, and in 1614 started a trading-station on Manhattan Island, at the mouth of the Hudson River, though it was not fully organised as a colony until 1626.

Virginia and Bermuda.—Meanwhile a number of English

* School Atlas, Plate 49*a*.

courtiers and traders had, in 1606, obtained a charter for a Virginia Company, to plant settlements in the region where Raleigh had made two unsuccessful attempts at colonisation during the reign of Elizabeth (1584 and 1587). The Company was divided into two branches, one, having its headquarters at Plymouth, to deal with the northern part of the area; the other, having its headquarters at London, to deal with the southern part of the area. Two expeditions were sent out. The northern one came to nothing; but the southern one planted a little group of settlers at Jamestown on the James River, which (with the aid of the parent company) took root and developed into the colony of *Virginia*. It had to face, at first, great difficulties, especially with the Indian tribes, from which it was rescued largely by the courage and resource of a romantic adventurer, Captain John Smith.* But in 1619 it was sufficiently developed to be equipped with a modest representative body to advise the governor; and in 1624, when the Company was wound up, the colony passed under the direct control of the king, who appointed a governor with an executive council. Meanwhile, in 1612, another modest settlement had been made in the *Bermuda* Islands, where Sir George Somers had been wrecked three years before. Bermuda also obtained a representative assembly in 1620, when it cannot have had more than a handful of settlers. Thus, from the very outset, these earliest English colonies were marked by a feature which distinguished them from all other European settlements: they were equipped with the institutions of self-government. That this should have happened under a king who believed in the Divine Right of Kings, and who was engaged in these very years in sharp conflicts with his Parliament, shows how deeply rooted was the English instinct of self-government.

The Pilgrim Fathers.—Before the end of the reign a yet more significant settlement had been made. Since the later years of Elizabeth, bands of English Puritans, mostly humble folk, had been emigrating to Holland in the hope of finding there a religious atmosphere more to their taste. One such band, which went from Scrooby in Lincolnshire in 1606, found that Holland was in this respect little better than England. They resolved to establish in the New World a Bible Commonwealth of their own, and for that purpose obtained a licence from the Virginia Company. In 1620

* There is a cheap reprint of Smith's *History of Virginia* in Rouse's English Classics, and a short Life of Smith in the English Men of Action Series.

they set sail from Plymouth, with many prayers, in the *Mayflower*. The winds carried them not to warm Virginia but to the inhospitable shores of Cape Cod. Here, after many hardships, their modest colony took root: they called it *Plymouth*, in memory of the last English soil their feet had touched. They organised themselves as a completely self-governing community, on the basis of their religious organisation. They were the Pilgrim Fathers, the forerunners of a remarkable series of religious plantations.

Thus five tiny colonies had been founded within the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The reign which saw these beginnings, and which also saw the beginning of the English connection with India, is memorable on these accounts. But the king cannot share the credit for these enterprises, which he rather impeded than encouraged.

3. Unrest at Home and the Beginnings of Parliamentary Conflict

A Threefold Controversy.—While these modest but momentous beginnings, in which he took so little interest, were being made, James found himself being drawn into controversy with his Parliament, with the common lawyers, and with the Puritans. These controversies did not become serious until the last years of his reign, when they all became merged in the beginnings of a tremendous conflict which rose to acuteness in the next reign. But the issues of this conflict were clearly emerging, and in this as in other respects the reign was a period of beginnings.

James and the Puritans.—The Puritan party in the Church was becoming yearly stronger. On James's journey to assume his throne (1603) he received a petition signed by some hundreds of clergy (the Millenary Petition), which demanded the removal of objectionable ceremonies. Next year (1604) the king met the leaders of the Puritan party at a conference at Hampton Court, which might have been made the occasion for a measure of comprehension. But the king was unbending. Though himself a Calvinist in theology, he feared and detested the Presbyterian system, of which he had had painful experience in Scotland, and regarded it as incompatible with royal authority. He would therefore make no concessions. On the contrary, after the conference, a series of new canons or rules were issued, the enforcement of which led to the

resignation of some three hundred ordained clergy. So long as the royal supremacy lasted, Puritans were forced to abandon the hope of remoulding the Church according to their ideas ; and they therefore tended to identify themselves with the opposition which was growing up in Parliament, where a majority in the House of Commons sympathised with them.

The Authorised Version. — One good result, however, followed from the Hampton Court Conference. A committee of scholars was set up to carry out a new "authorised" translation of the Bible. In 1611 the Authorised Version was published. Its noble and beautiful language gave it, from the first, an extraordinary place in the affections of the people. It has been one of the great moulding forces in the nation's life. In the years following 1611 the English people became a Bible-reading people, and the more serious-minded among them made the Bible their rule of life, and learnt to trust their own judgment of what it ordained rather than the authoritative dicta of bishops and Church canons.

Common Law v. Prerogative.—Alongside of the religious controversy went a legal controversy. The common lawyers found it hard to admit the independent jurisdiction claimed by the "prerogative" courts—Star Chamber, High Commission, Court of Requests, Council of the North, Council of Wales—which had assumed so much power during the Tudor period. They claimed that nothing was valid that went counter to the "common law," and that not even the king could override it. On the other hand, the "prerogative" lawyers maintained that the king was the source of all law, and that nothing could derogate from his ultimate authority. In effect, this was a conflict between the theory of limited monarchy and the theory of absolutism. Sir Edward Coke, the greatest lawyer of his time, made a bold fight on this issue. In 1616 he was deprived of his office of Chief Justice because he upheld the sovereignty of the common law. He transferred his activities to Parliament, where he became one of the leaders of the opposition.

Trade Dues and Bate's Case.—A third subject of controversy was finance. In spite of her parsimony, Elizabeth had been in great straits towards the end of her reign, because of the costly campaigns in Ireland. She had fallen deeply into debt, and had been reduced to selling crown lands on a large scale, which of course diminished the revenue. James was therefore forced to ask for parliamentary grants, in spite of his avoidance of wars ; and he used every device he

could think of to raise money within the law. He sold the new rank of baronetcy quite openly. He tried to persuade Parliament to buy out his feudal rights (which were irregular and vexatious) for a fixed annual sum; but Parliament refused to accept the proposed "Great Contract" (1610), and the abolition of feudal dues was postponed for fifty years. James found, however, a very important and an expanding source of revenue in the trade dues. Duties on imported goods, known as "tunnage and poundage" were, by a custom dating back to Richard II, regularly granted to the crown for life. The crown had, however, always assumed the power of revising the rates, and extending the duties to new imports. In 1606 a merchant named Bate refused to pay a new duty on currants. The courts decided against him, on the ground that the levying of these dues was a prerogative of the crown. Encouraged by this, the government issued in 1608 a new *Book of Rates*, the effect of which was that James was able to dispense with parliamentary grants for ten years (1611–1621). If the king was free to levy what duties he liked on the swelling volume of English trade, he might easily make himself independent of Parliament. It was inevitable that Parliament should refuse to accept such a position.

The Theory of Divine Right.—Thus on three issues—the religious question, the conflict between the prerogative and the common law, and the question of taxation—differences of vital import were gradually emerging during James I's reign. But behind all these lay a still deeper issue: the conflict between the ideas of despotic monarchy and self-government. The Tudors had been almost despots in practice; but their power had rested upon consent, and had been used with tact. Even under Elizabeth the readiness of Parliament to be a mere instrument of royal authority had been diminishing. Now, when the beloved queen was dead, the country gentlemen, lawyers and merchants of the House of Commons were ready to claim a more real partnership in government; and historical scholars like Selden were furbishing up mediæval precedents for their claims. On the other hand, James I was not content merely to cling to the powers Elizabeth had exercised. He really believed in the Divine Right of Kings—which was, it must be remembered, the prevalent political doctrine throughout Europe; and he wrote a book to prove it. Here is a passage from a speech he made to his Parliament, which was in the mood to claim new powers: "The state of monarchy is the supremest thing upon earth; for kings are

not only God's lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God's throne, but even by God Himself they are called Gods. As to dispute what God may do is blasphemy, so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king may do." Listening to such words, Parliament became only the more grimly resolved to stick to its rights, and to revive those powers which had been allowed to drop under the Tudors.

First Parliament: Impositions.—But the inevitable conflict developed slowly. James's first Parliament, which had four sessions between 1604 and 1611, was handled by the experienced Cecil, and was relatively amenable, until 1610. Nevertheless, it obstinately insisted upon deciding its own election disputes, it repeatedly protested against the king's religious policy, and it would not agree with the king about relations with Scotland and other matters. In short, it was restive and distrustful. And in 1610 and 1611 there was a storm about the impositions levied under the Book of Rates. Parliament was dissolved, and the king went on collecting impositions; the question remained unsettled for thirty years.

The Addled Parliament.—In 1614 James tried another Parliament. The shrewd Cecil was now dead (1612), and a detestable Scottish favourite, Carr, Earl of Somerset, was surrounding the Court with a sordid atmosphere of divorce cases and poison mysteries. Parliament was so fractious that it would discuss nothing but Impositions, and was dismissed with nothing done—it was known as the "Addled" Parliament. Thereafter the king resolved to do without Parliament. He was successful until his pacific policy broke down. War, as always, gave the opportunity for a revival of parliamentary power; and in the last years of the reign the great constitutional issue was pretty definitely raised.

4. The Thirty Years' War and the Claims of Parliament

The Spanish Marriage.—It was James I's best feature that he detested war, and most of all religious war, which it was the aim of his policy to avert. But throughout his reign an outbreak of religious war had been gradually approaching in Germany, where the rival faiths were marshalled against one another. James vainly dreamed that the trouble might be averted if England and Spain, the leading Protestant and Catholic powers, came together. With that idea, he started negotiations in 1617 for the marriage of his son to a Spanish princess; and the Spanish ambassador, Gondomar, became

very influential at court. Spain had no intention of doing what James wanted; she merely played with his sentimentalism. But the negotiations for the Spanish match dragged on until 1623. They were detestable in the eyes of all Englishmen, with the traditions of the sixteenth century behind them. And, of course, they did nothing to avert the war in Germany, but only prevented the influence of England from having any weight.

The Thirty Years' War.—In 1618 the war in Germany began, when the Bohemians elected James's Protestant son-in-law, Frederick the Elector Palatine, to fill the Bohemian throne, a throne which the Catholic House of Habsburg had held for a century. Frederick was swiftly driven out of Bohemia, and soon lost also his hereditary dominions (1620).* From this beginning the conflict spread until it involved all Germany, and ultimately most of Europe. James had condemned Frederick's action in Bohemia. But he was not ready to see Frederick deprived of his own hereditary lands. For this purpose he fatuously pinned his hope to Spain, and tried to press on the marriage. But he also allowed English volunteers to go to Frederick's aid. English sentiment was all on Frederick's side, and there was keen indignation at the king's failure to help him, and at the continued negotiations with Spain. A Protestant war against Spain was what the English people wanted.

Third Parliament: Impeachments.—It was in these circumstances that James met his third Parliament, in 1621; and he found them in a very angry mood. He asked them for a subsidy to enable him to restore his son-in-law. Ultimately they gave it; but not until they had very vigorously criticised the king's policy, and attacked his ministers. They also revived the old procedure of impeachment, which had long since been disused. They impeached one Mompesson for his abuse of monopolies; they even impeached the Lord Chancellor—the great Francis Bacon †—for accepting bribes; and in both cases the House of Lords gave verdicts against the accused, which the king had to accept. More serious still, they directly attacked the proposed Spanish match, and sent a petition to the king asking that Charles should be married to "one of our own religion." At this invasion of his prerogative James raged furiously

* School Atlas, Plates 15 and 16; larger Atlas, Plate 46–7.

† One of Macaulay's Essays is on Bacon, and there is an excellent short life of Bacon by Dean Church (English Men of Letters).

and forbade the House to "meddle with deep matters of State." The Commons replied by passing a Protestation declaring it to be the right of Parliament to debate all questions "concerning the king, state, and defence of the realm, and of the Church of England." James thereupon dissolved Parliament, imprisoned some of its leading members, and, sending for the Journals, tore out the Protestation with his own hands. The issue between Crown and Parliament was definitely raised. Parliament had asserted the right to be consulted upon all questions of policy, and not merely on grants of money.

War with Spain.—For some years James had fallen under the influence of a dashing and brilliant young favourite, whom he had created Duke of Buckingham; and the Duke and Prince Charles were sworn friends. In effect, these impetuous young men now took the conduct of affairs out of James's hands. In 1623, without consulting him, they went off *incogniti* to Spain to try and bring the Spanish match to a head. They came back in disgust, having learnt that they had been fooled, and resolved to throw themselves into the popular cause, declare war against Spain, and send an expedition to the Palatinate. This sudden change of front made relations easier with James's last Parliament (1624) which readily voted money for the popular war. But even this Parliament sharpened its weapons by impeaching Middlesex, the Lord Treasurer. This was done, however, at the instigation of Charles and Buckingham, who wanted to get rid of him: "You will live to have your bellyful of impeachments," said the old king when Charles asked for his sanction.

Military Failure.—After this complete reversal of the policy of peace to which he had clung throughout the reign, James lived only long enough to see the humiliating failure of the first English military expedition. A force of 6,000 men was sent to Holland to act under the command of a German soldier, Count Mansfeld. It did nothing, but was wasted away by disease and mismanagement; and the cost of it put the treasury into debt, and made a fresh recourse to Parliament inevitable. When James died, in March 1625, the stage was set for a more dramatic conflict than any he had known. His reign was, indeed, the transition from the Elizabethan era of royal autocracy and foreign war to the era of domestic revolution.

CHAPTER XX

CROWN AND PARLIAMENT (1625–1642)

1. War and Parliamentary Conflict (1625–1629)

Charles I.—The new king started his reign with a gleam of popularity, because he had drawn England into a Protestant war. But it soon clouded over, and after four hectic years England found herself humiliated abroad, and on the verge of revolution at home, mainly owing to the character of the king and his confidant the Duke of Buckingham. Charles I, twenty-five years old at his accession, was a handsome, dignified, and cultivated man, with a fine taste in arts and letters, and all the private virtues. But in politics he lacked imagination and a sense of realities. Self-centred, reticent, obstinate, and slow-witted, he could never understand any point of view but his own. He would never face facts ; and was apt to make promises with the intention of evading them.

The Anglo-Catholic Party.—Charles was sincerely religious. But, unfortunately for him, his beliefs were those of a party. Over against the Puritans a rival party, which may best be described as Anglo-Catholic, had been growing in strength in the later years of James I. They valued the very ceremonies which the Puritans detested. They scorned the rigid Sabbatarianism of the Puritans. They interpreted the Bible in the light of the traditions of the Church, and questioned the right of private judgment. While rejecting transubstantiation, they proclaimed the Real Presence in the Communion, and exalted the divine character of the priesthood. They held episcopacy to be of divine ordination. They repudiated the characteristic Calvinist doctrine of predestination. And, in the political sphere, they exalted the divine character of monarchy, and were the strongest advocates of royal absolutism. They were therefore the natural allies of the crown in the coming struggle ; but they were decidedly the weaker party in the Church, though among them were some of the saintliest divines of that day. Charles had already made a friend of the most active Anglo-Catholic leader, William Laud,* Bishop of St. Asaph, who was marked out for Puritan hostility. The favour which the king markedly showed to

* There is a short Life of Laud by W. H. Hutton.

clergy of the rising Anglo-Catholic school aroused from the first the distrust of Parliament, which was predominantly Puritan.

Reckless War-plans.—In his first years Charles was dazzled and dominated by his friend, the reckless, self-confident and irresponsible Duke of Buckingham. Together they had light-heartedly launched the country into the war with Spain, and undertaken to restore the Elector Palatine. They were planning grandiose schemes for this purpose. The king of Denmark, supported by a large English subsidy, was to invade Germany and restore the Protestant cause. Perhaps the Dutch would help. There was a hope, also, that France would join in the fray ; and it was partly with that end in view that a marriage was hurriedly arranged for the king with Henrietta Maria of France (1625). But the marriage treaty provided that the queen should preserve her own religion, and that toleration should be granted to the Catholics—a provision which was certain to arouse the alarm of Parliament. And this was not the worst. Charles promised to lend ships to France to help in reducing the French Huguenots, who were in rebellion, in order that she might be free to take part in the campaign. English ships to serve against Protestants ! The very sailors refused to obey.

First Parliament : Tunnage and Poundage.—All these things poisoned Charles' relations with his first Parliament (1625). They voted him money, indeed ; but less than one-seventh of what he needed to fulfil his various obligations, especially to Denmark. They broke a long precedent by voting tunnage and poundage for one year only, and not for life—a means of ensuring the re-opening of the Impositions question. They denounced the Anglo-Catholic clergy, and demanded the enforcement of the laws against " recusants " (Roman Catholics). Finally, they vigorously attacked Buckingham and the king's other advisers, and vehemently criticised the giving of aid against the French Protestants. Charles angrily dissolved Parliament. They had left him without the means of carrying on the war.

Military Failures.—The result was soon seen when an ambitious naval expedition against *Cadiz*, planned on the old Elizabethan lines, ended in humiliating failure. This was the consequence of James I's neglect of the navy : Charles took the lesson to heart, and was genuinely eager to restore the navy's strength. Again, in Germany, Denmark suffered disaster (1626), and blamed England for her failure to redeem her promises.

Second Parliament: Impeachment of Buckingham.—In these circumstances, desperately needing money, Charles summoned his second Parliament (1626). But the second Parliament was even more uncompromising than the first. Led by the fiery eloquence of the Cornish knight, Sir John Eliot,* the House of Commons proceeded to impeach the Duke of Buckingham, as the cause of all this failure—comparing him to Sejanus, the minister of the tyrant Tiberius. In defence of his friend, Charles once more angrily dissolved Parliament.

War with France: The Five Knights.—But he was still without the means to carry on the war. And as if his difficulties were not already great enough, the irresponsible Duke light-heartedly quarrelled with France as well as Spain, and resolved to relieve the Huguenots of La Rochelle, whom he had recently been ready to help in conquering. But how was money to be got? Charles went on levying tunnage and poundage. He tried to raise as a free gift what would have been paid as a subsidy, arguing (not without justice) that Parliament had first driven him into a war, and then refused him the means to carry it on. This failing, he levied a *forced loan*. Those who refused to pay were thrown into prison, or had soldiers billeted on them, or were themselves "pressed" for service as soldiers or sailors. Five knights, imprisoned in this way, applied for a writ of *habeas corpus* (1627), in answer to which, by long custom, the gaoler ought to show why the prisoner was kept in custody. The gaoler reported that the knights were imprisoned "by the special command of the king"; and the judges decided that this was an adequate cause. But if non-parliamentary taxation, enforced by arbitrary imprisonment, could not be prevented, what had become of English liberty, and where was the use of Magna Carta? Meanwhile the Duke of Buckingham had led a great naval and military force to the relief of La Rochelle; but on the *Ile de Ré*, opposite La Rochelle, his army was cut to pieces, and he had to re-embark with a loss of 4,000 men (1627). To redeem this disaster, money must somehow be raised; and once more Charles summoned his Parliament.

Third Parliament: Petition of Right.—This third Parliament brought the conflict to its climax (1628). It contained many famous men: Eliot, and Coke, and the resolute Yorkshire squire Sir Thomas Wentworth, who loathed inefficiency, and Hampden,

* There is a Life of Eliot by John Forster.

and Pym, and (a silent member) Oliver Cromwell. They assembled in the solemn belief that they had to save not only English prestige abroad, but English liberty and the Protestant religion. Disregarding for the moment the king's needs, they drew up a grave and weighty statement of the nation's grievances, which was known as the *Petition of Right*, and demanded that before a penny was granted, the king should accept it. It declared any "gift, loan, benevolence, or other tax" to be illegal without parliamentary authority. It declared the imprisonment of any man without cause shown to be illegal. These were the main clauses: they secured Parliament's control of the purse and the liberty of the subject; there were also other clauses dealing with billeting and other grievances. The king had to yield: Parliament would not tolerate any of his attempts at evasion; and the Petition of Right became the law of the land.

Final Breach with Parliament.—Then Parliament proceeded to impeach an Anglo-Catholic clergyman who had preached the doctrines of absolutism; and they also demanded the dismissal of Buckingham. That cause of difference, however, was soon removed; for in August 1628, while preparing for his second French expedition, Buckingham was assassinated by a private enemy at Portsmouth. But Parliament still went on with its protests. In a second session (1629) it attacked Laud and other Anglo-Catholic divines. A new quarrel also arose when it was discovered that the king was still levying tunnage and poundage (which he held not to be covered by the Petition). The king finally lost patience and resolved on dissolution. But the doors of the House were locked, and the Speaker was held down in his chair, while three resolutions were passed declaring that any one who introduced innovations in religion, or who either proposed or paid taxes without the authority of Parliament, was an enemy of his country. Then the House broke up, after the most memorable sessions it had yet held. The angry king (Petition or no Petition) imprisoned nine of the parliamentary leaders, including the greatest of them, Sir John Eliot. Eliot died in captivity two years later; and two of his companions were not released until 1640.

Withdrawal from War.—This was the end of the first phase of the great conflict. Realising that it was impossible to work with Parliament, Charles resolved to govern without it—as his predecessors had often done for long periods. But this meant that the costly luxury of war must be avoided. He therefore withdrew

wholly from the continental struggle, which went on with varying fortunes for another twenty years, until it was ended by the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648. During this period Germany was reduced to chaos; the power of France was raised to a dazzling height; Sweden entered upon a brief period of military glory; the Dutch enjoyed immense prosperity, and built up a mighty commercial dominion; and Spain definitely fell from her high estate. But in all these great events England had no part. Her prestige, so high under Elizabeth, had been reduced to vanishing point by the events of 1624–1629. She counted for nothing at all in the affairs of Europe, while the predominance in oversea trade definitely fell to the Dutch. The islands were left to themselves. But during the next eleven years they were fermenting towards a final outburst.

2. Personal Government and Laud's Church Policy (1629–1640)

Fiscal Devices.—The eleven years, 1629–1640, during which Charles I dispensed with Parliament, were, in England, so placid that he might well feel that his experiment was a success. The country was prosperous; trade was growing; and the trade-dues (which Charles, supported by the lawyers, held he was entitled to collect as part of the ancient revenues of the crown) were expanding. They were supplemented by the revival of old feudal devices such as distraint of knighthood (borrowed from Edward I) or fines for the infringement of royal forests. An additional device was the levy of ship-money—which had often been collected in Tudor times and earlier—for the maintenance of the navy. Ship-money was raised from the maritime counties in 1634, and from all the counties in 1635, without serious protest, and the proceeds were honestly used to strengthen the navy.

Hampden and Ship-money.—But when in 1636 a third levy of ship-money was made, and it appeared that this was to be turned into a regular source of revenue, John Hampden,* a wealthy squire, and a member of the Petition of Right Parliament, who was assessed to pay twenty shillings, refused to pay on the ground that the levy was illegal. The case was fought out in the law-courts, with an immense array of constitutional learning. The decision went against

* One of Macaulay's Essays is on Hampden.

Hampden, by the votes of seven out of twelve judges; but there were five who risked their livelihood by voting that the levy was illegal. If such a tax could be regularly levied after the Petition of Right, what became of the liberties of England? It was characteristic of seventeenth-century England that so grave an issue should be fought out in the law-courts, and that the decision should be accepted until there was a chance of altering it constitutionally.

Laud and Wentworth.—If these methods should be continued and expanded, a power more absolute than the Tudors had ever wielded might have taken root in England. This was clearly the intention of Charles, and of his chief advisers, among whom Laud (archbishop since 1633) now took the principal place: Laud sincerely believed in the Divine Right of Kings. It was also the declared intention of a very able man, Sir Thomas Wentworth (later Lord Strafford),* who, having supported the Petition of Right because he detested the inefficiency of Buckingham, had come over to the king's side because he did not believe that Parliament could govern efficiently. "Thorough" was his motto; he was an intimate friend and constant correspondent of Laud; and although he held no high office in England, from 1632 onwards he was at work in Ireland, building up the royal power there, and forming an army upon which the king could draw at need.

Laud's Church Policy.—The main activity of these years, under Laud's direction, was the organisation of the Church of England upon Anglo-Catholic lines. Laud was not a persecutor. No man suffered death for his faith in England in his time. Some ferocious sentences of imprisonment and ear-cropping were indeed inflicted upon Puritan writers by the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court; but they were nothing in comparison with the penalties imposed by Henry VIII or even Elizabeth. Laud's work was to staff the Church gradually with Anglo-Catholic clergy, and to insist that the ceremonial order imposed by the Prayer-book should be strictly observed in every church. He was content to deny promotion to Puritans, and to put a stop to their preaching; he was probably less severe in enforcing his own views than the Puritans would have been. But they were the views of a minority; and they were closely connected with the theory of Divine Right.

* There is a short Life of Strafford by H. D. Traill (English Men of Action).

Changing Temper of the Nation.—All this went on without overt protest for eleven years. There were no rebellions or serious riots. England, full of prosperity, seemed to have accepted the non-parliamentary regime. But the stillness was ominous. In hundreds of manors and counting-houses there were grave discussions as to the trend of royal policy. And a change insensibly came over the tone of English literature; a deeper and graver note emerged. The great dramatic creation of Elizabeth's reign had lasted right through the reign of James I: indeed, the greatest of the "Elizabethan" dramas—Shakespeare's noblest tragedies, and all the best work of Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Webster and Massinger—belong to that period. Then came a change; and the poets of the Carolean period strike a new note of reflection, and show an interest in religion almost unknown to the Elizabethans. Milton, whose earlier works belong to these years, takes the place of Shakespeare. Quietness did not mean submission.

3. Emigration to America (1629–1640)

The Puritan Emigration.—The only overt protest against the Laudian regime which came from the Puritans took the form of a remarkable movement of emigration, which began, on a large scale, immediately after the dissolution of the Petition of Right Parliament, and went on with growing strength throughout the years of personal government. Since the Puritans were not to be allowed to mould the Church of England after their own ideas, they went forth to find new homes in the New World, following the trail that had been blazed by the Pilgrim Fathers. It was not toleration that they wanted—they would have been less tolerant than Laud had they enjoyed his power; they wanted to construct Bible Commonwealths where every one would be forced to live according to the Puritan ideal. Charles I made no serious attempt to check this emigration; perhaps he was glad to be rid of troublesome citizens; and he told one of the leaders of the movement that he did not desire to impose the rules of the Church of England upon them. Nor did the emigrants intend to cast off their allegiance. They conceived themselves to be still citizens of the English state, and they carried English law and institutions with them.

Massachusetts.—The first of these new plantations,* which

* School Atlas, Plate 49*a*.

were unlike anything that has been seen before or since in the history of colonisation, was Massachusetts, founded in 1629 by a body of 2,000 emigrants, which included many gentlemen of rank and university men. Year after year fleets of ships came out to Boston with new emigrants ; and by 1642 the population of the new colony had risen to 18,000. It was governed by a close oligarchy of leading men, who derived their power from the fact that a Company had been formed to float the colony : they were its directors. In local affairs power was shared by all Church members, but the strictest orthodoxy was exacted. Massachusetts was an example of the rule of the saints, which was later attempted in England. It was utterly intolerant.

Other New England Colonies.—In 1633 a second colony, organised by a group of leading Puritans in England, was founded in *Connecticut*. A third group, the most rigid of all, established themselves at *New Haven* in 1638. And between 1636 and 1638 various groups of unorthodox refugees, driven out of the other colonies, settled in and about *Rhode Island*. There were also some settlements, not purely Puritan in character, on the coast of *Maine*. Thus before 1640 six distinct self-governing settlements (including Plymouth) had been established in that barren projecting angle of America which is called New England. Then the emigration dwindled or ceased ; because with the meeting of the Long Parliament and the outbreak of civil war there was plenty for Puritans to do in England.

Maryland.—These were not the only colonising activities of this period. In 1632 the Catholic Lord Baltimore, taking a leaf from the Puritan book, obtained from Charles I a grant of land to the north of Virginia, to be a refuge for Roman Catholics. In honour of the queen it was called *Maryland*. From the first its settlers enjoyed self-governing rights ; they also enjoyed something which was at that date unique in the world, and which sharply distinguished them from the New England colonies—religious toleration.

Finally this period saw the settlement of a number of small West Indian islands *—Nevis, Barbuda, Antigua, and Montserrat (between 1628 and 1632) ; and a very curious Puritan settlement was made at Providence Island, off the coast of Nicaragua. In India, also, the

* School Atlas, Plate 48*a*.

activities of the East India Company developed rapidly during this period of quiescence. In 1639 they built, on land purchased from the local raja, *Fort St. George*, which was to develop into Madras ; and in the same year they planted a factory on the River Hooghly, the predecessor of Calcutta. Thus religious disturbance combined with commercial activity led to a very striking development of oversea settlement and trade. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the whole movement is that the government, which at home was striving after absolutism and religious uniformity, offered no obstacles in the oversea settlements to the development of self-government and religious diversity.

4. The Brewing of the Storm in Ireland and Scotland

While England lay quiet, and apparently submissive, and while Puritans were pouring over the Atlantic in thousands to find room for their strict modes of life, in Ireland and in Scotland the king and his agents were at work striving to establish royal absolutism.

Wentworth in Ireland.—In Ireland the task was entrusted to Wentworth (1632). By seven years of steady and able work he succeeded in reducing all Ireland to better order and more complete submission than she had ever known. He fostered new industries, especially the linen industry ; he gave to Ireland a new prosperity. At the price of some concessions to the Catholics, he obtained from Parliament a substantial revenue, though there was some trickery which made the Catholics feel they had been deceived. He organised an army, primarily to maintain order, but ultimately to be a source of royal strength. If he had been content with these achievements, he might have turned Ireland into a real danger to the liberty of both England and Scotland. But the traditions of English government in Ireland were too strong. He projected a plantation of Connaught—the only undisturbed province—which awakened all the old alarms and heart-burnings. He was not able to carry it out before the crisis flamed up in Scotland and England (1639) ; but the damage had been done, and Ireland was a broken reed to the king's party in the coming struggle.

Religious Tyranny in Scotland.—Meanwhile in Scotland the king and Laud, using the all but despotic power which James I had built up, but showing none of James's shrewd sense of how far it was safe to go, had set themselves to destroy the Presbyterian system, and to assimilate the Church of Scotland to that of England, as Laud

had reformed it. With incredible folly Charles began by alienating all the Scottish nobles, who had always been jealous of the Kirk. James had skilfully played off the nobles against the Kirk; Charles required the nobles to disgorge a large part of the plunder they had taken from the Scottish Church, in order that he might find funds for the endowment of his bishops, and by this act he ensured their hostility. In 1633, visiting Scotland to be crowned, he horrified the rigid Scots by the ceremonies and vestures that were used; and he then forced through the Scottish Parliament an Act requiring the universal use of the surplice, which the Scots regarded as an emblem of "papistry." Next year (1634) he set up, without consulting Parliament or the General Assembly, a Scottish High Commission Court; and in 1635 he issued—again by his own sole authority—a book of canons whereby the government and ritual of the Church were henceforth to be determined. The whole system of John Knox was swept aside; and it was ordained that a liturgy, to be published in the following year (1636), should be used in every church.

The Scots Revolt.—The liturgy was fixed to be read for the first time in St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, on July 23rd, 1637. But the reading caused a riot; and all over the country its introduction led to the same result. The tumult was so great that the Privy Council suddenly lost all its power. The reins of government were seized by four Committees, known as the "Tables," representing nobles, lairds (or squires), burgesses, and ministers. At a single stroke a national organisation sprang into being, and Charles found he had to deal with a united nation. No such united rising had ever yet been seen in any country. Thoughtful Englishmen watched these events with sympathy.

The Covenant and the General Assembly.—When Charles refused to accede to the petition of the "Tables" that his recent changes should be withdrawn, they responded by drawing up a National Covenant and declaration of faith, and sending it out for signature. Amid scenes of extraordinary emotion it was signed in every parish; many signed it in their own blood. To deal with a national rising of this kind, money was needed, and it could not be got without a meeting of the English Parliament. Charles was therefore compelled to yield to the demand of the Tables that a freely elected General Assembly should be summoned. This Assembly—the most democratic body, and the most completely

representative of a whole nation, that had yet met anywhere in the world—met at Glasgow on November 21st, 1638 ; and its meeting began the British Revolution. In defiance of the king's edict dissolving it, the Assembly proceeded to sweep aside all Charles' changes. It abolished episcopacy. It abolished the High Commission. It abolished the canons and the liturgy ; and it then proceeded to re-establish the whole Presbyterian system.

The First "Bishops' War."—Such defiance could only be met by force. Charles scraped together an army. But the Scots carried out an enthusiastic general levy ; and their organisation was in the hands of men trained in the continental wars, notably Alexander Leslie, who had been a field-marshal under the great warrior Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden. There was no resisting such a force. Without even venturing to fight a battle, Charles asked for a truce (June 1639). But a truce was of no use to him unless he could raise an effective army ; and to get the funds for this, he had to summon the English Parliament once more, after eleven years. Thus it was the fervour of the Scots that ended the long quiescence, and raised the greatest issue of government that had yet been discussed in any country.

5. The Short and the Long Parliaments (1640–1642)

The Short Parliament.—In April 1640, Parliament met once more. It was a united body ; and its leader was the practised parliamentarian, John Pym, who had fought through the Parliament of 1628–1629. Asked for supplies for the Scottish war, Parliament replied that it knew not whether it had any money to give until its liberties were secure. Within three weeks the "Short Parliament" had been dissolved, and riots were breaking out in London.

The Second "Bishops' War."—Somehow or other, the king managed to raise a sort of army to face the Scots when the truce expired. But his untrained troops could not resist the disciplined Scottish army. They were brushed aside at *Newburn* on the Tyne ; the Scots swept over Northumberland and Durham. There they halted, demanding an immediate summons of the English Parliament ; and granted an armistice on condition that their expenses were paid—£25,000 a month.

The Long Parliament.—There was nothing for it but submission ; and on November 3rd, 1640, one of the most momentous

dates in the history of free institutions, the Long Parliament met. Its members came together with a practically unanimous resolve that the constitution of England, and the relations of crown and Parliament, must be defined once for all with absolute clarity. On this there was no division of parties. To begin with, the Scots were granted maintenance allowance until the questions at issue should be decided. Then Parliament prepared to punish the ministers responsible for the fallen system. Wentworth (now Lord Strafford) was impeached ; Laud was thrown into prison to await his turn ; the Secretary of State and the Lord Keeper only escaped vengeance by fleeing to the Continent. The proceedings against Strafford were long delayed, and did not come to a crisis until the next year.

Constitutional Definition.—Meanwhile, in a series of Acts passed mainly in the early part of 1641, the constitution was defined. A *Triennial Act* laid it down that Parliament must be summoned at least once every three years. A *Tunnage and Poundage Act* laid it down that no customs duties might be levied without parliamentary grant, while another Act abolished ship-money, distraint of knighthood, and other modes of raising money used by the late government. These Acts, in conjunction with the Petition of Right, reduced the crown to absolute financial dependence upon Parliament. All the prerogative courts—Star Chamber, High Commission, Council of the North, Council of Wales—were abolished by a single Act, and the crown was left to depend upon the ordinary law of the land. These Acts definitely laid down the principles of limited monarchy. They formed the permanent part of the work of the Long Parliament. They were carried with practical unanimity ; and when the coming revolution was over, and the monarchy was restored, these Acts still remained in force.

Execution of Strafford.—But here unanimity ceased, and a division began to appear between a more extreme and a more moderate party. The cleavage began on the prosecution of Strafford. He defended himself with great courage and resource ; and indeed it seemed impossible to make out a charge of treason against him, since treason consisted in "levying war against the king." Feeling that things were going wrong, the parliamentary leaders abandoned the method of impeachment for that of attainder—that is, condemnation without trial : a method of tyranny, beloved by Henry VIII. The Act of Attainder was passed. Charles, after agonising hesitations, signed it, and never thereafter forgave himself for his surrender.

On May 12th, 1641, Strafford was executed ; but the vindictiveness of this Act caused a reaction in many minds. The prosecution of Laud was dropped in the meanwhile : he waited for death in prison until 1645, when he too was executed.

Religious Differences.—Division became more acute when the more extreme Puritans proceeded to introduce violent religious changes in a Root and Branch Bill " for the utter abolition of archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, prebendaries, and canons." This aroused the hostility of all who loved the Church of England as it had existed since the Reformation. Led by Edward Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, and by the chivalrous Lord Falkland, they fought the Bill steadily ; it was only carried by a narrow majority. Parliament was, in fact, almost equally divided ; and with this sobering reflection, it broke up for a vacation.

The King in Scotland.—During the vacation two things happened which further embittered feeling. The king went to Scotland to settle the Scottish problem. He had, of course, to accept the full restoration of the Presbyterian system. But he got into touch with a group of Scottish nobles, headed by the Marquis of Montrose, who did not want to push the struggle too far. There was also a foolish plot, formed by some of his friends, to seize some of the Presbyterian leaders. These episodes aroused the suspicions of the parliamentary leaders, who had lost all confidence in the king.

The Irish Rebellion.—A worse thing also happened. Suddenly, in October 1641, a widespread insurrection broke out among the Catholics of Ireland. Many Protestants were killed, perhaps as many as five thousand, and the numbers were naturally magnified in England. The rebels claimed to be acting for the king, and his enemies in England were ready to believe that this was so. It was obvious that the rebellion must be quelled. But could the king be trusted to control the forces necessary for quelling it ? On this issue, of confidence or no-confidence in the king, a deep cleavage appeared in Parliament, which corresponded with the cleavage already made between the supporters and opponents of the Root and Branch Bill. A King's Party had come into being.

The Grand Remonstrance.—When Parliament met again, Pym introduced a document known as the *Grand Remonstrance*, which definitely declared no confidence in the king, setting forth all the offences with which he was charged. After a stormy debate, it was carried by only eleven votes : the cleavage between parties

was complete. Next the majority leaders introduced a *Militia Bill*, to take the command of army and navy out of the hands of the king, and put them under officers appointed by Parliament. This was a constitutional revolution.

The Five Members.—Realising that he had now a strong body of supporters, the king foolishly decided to attack his enemies. He prepared to impeach one of the lords and five Commoners—Pym, Hampden, Hazlerigg, Holles, and Strode ; and with a band of excited young loyalists he went down to the House to arrest them. They escaped by river from Westminster to the City of London, which was overwhelmingly anti-royalist, and two days later returned, escorted by the train-bands of London and by 4,000 freeholders of Buckinghamshire.

The Final Breach.—The king dared not remain in London. Further discussion was useless. Six weeks later the queen fled to France, while the king set out for York (March 1642). He was followed by *Nineteen Propositions*, drawn up by the parliamentary majority, the effect of which would have been to reduce him to a mere figure-head. He would not even discuss them. This was the end ; and in August the royal standard was raised at Nottingham, and civil war had begun.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CIVIL WAR (1642–1652)

1. The Character of the Civil War

Varying Issues.—The civil war which began when Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham lasted, with only brief intermissions, for ten years, and affected every part of the British Islands. The issues were different in each of the three countries. In England it was a conflict between two views of the place of the king in the constitution, and between two religious attitudes. In Scotland it was a war for the supremacy of the Presbyterian system, not merely of belief and worship, but of national organisation. In Ireland it was a rebellion of the oppressed Irish Catholics against English and Protestant ascendancy. These varying aims confused and complicated the issues. While the main and deciding struggle was fought

out in England, it was deeply influenced by the course of events in Scotland and Ireland, and the distinctive features of the struggle in the two smaller countries must always be kept in mind.

The War in Ireland.—The struggle in Ireland was the most isolated part of the whole war.* It is unnecessary to follow its confused details; but it will be convenient to describe its main features, which remained unchanged until Cromwell went over in 1649 to subjugate the country. After the rebellion of 1641, the Irish Catholics were masters of at least three-fifths of the country. In 1642 they gave themselves a national organisation by setting up a sort of Parliament, with a managing council, at Kilkenny. There were two parties at Kilkenny—those who did not wish to cut the connection with England, and who would have been satisfied with a free Irish Parliament and freedom of Catholic worship; and those who aimed at independence. The latter had the support of a papal nuncio, Rinuccini, whose influence was very great; but the more moderate party were too strong to be disregarded. These divided counsels probably alone prevented the Catholics from destroying the weak forces opposed to them. These were of two kinds. In Dublin and parts of Leinster the Marquis of Ormond held out for the king at the head of the remnants of Wentworth's army and of the English settlers. He had no hope of reconquering the country, and his only chance of helping the king's cause lay in some accommodation with the Catholics, such as was tried in 1643. In the north the Scottish settlers in Ulster held out in a few strongholds, with the aid of a small force sent across by the Scottish Parliament in 1641. They would not make common cause with Ormond, and their sympathies were rather Scottish than English. They held out with great difficulty against the Catholic forces of Ulster, which inflicted upon them a crushing defeat at *Benburb* in 1646. Had the Irish Catholics pushed home their advantage, they might have brought English rule to an end. As it was, Ireland had to be re-conquered by Cromwell in 1649. Until that date, therefore, we may almost disregard the Irish struggle, and fix our attention upon the main and decisive conflict in England and Scotland.

Parties in Scotland.—There was very little division of opinion in Scotland, though the gallant Montrose led a small royalist party, and struck a bold stroke for the king in 1644. The nation was

* School Atlas, Plate 39*b*.

practically united in desiring the triumph of the Presbyterian system, if possible, throughout the Islands. It had little interest in the constitutional problems that exercised the English, and had no desire to overthrow a Scottish king, if only he would accept Presbyterianism.

The Two Sides in England.—In England the division of opinion was acute.* Every class, every county and many families were divided. High Churchmen were for the king, Puritans for the Parliament. The king had on his side three-quarters of the House of Lords, and one-third of the House of Commons. The majority of the landowning class were king's men, and carried their tenantry with them, especially in the north and west ; but a substantial number of landowners were Parliament men—a majority, indeed, in the south-eastern counties, and in some regions, especially in the east, the yeomanry were enthusiastically parliamentarian. The trading and manufacturing towns, notably London, were the main strongholds of the parliamentary party ; but in most or all of them there was a royalist element—one-third of the inhabitants, it was said, even in London. Everywhere, however, there was a large neutral element, consisting of people who did not care deeply about the issues involved, or who distrusted alike the character and record of the king, and the extravagances of the parliamentary leaders. In many counties these formed leagues to keep the war away from their borders. This was why both sides found it difficult to raise recruits, though the armies in the field were always small. Broadly speaking, the king was strongest in the relatively backward north and west, where feudalism had lasted longest, and the Reformation had made slowest progress ; while Parliament was strongest in the prosperous regions of the south and east, which included all the important ports. This had the great advantage that the dues on trade came into the parliamentary exchequer. Moreover, the navy (built up by ship-money) early declared for Parliament.

Nature of the Armies.—To begin with, neither side could command any body of trained soldiers, for England had never possessed a standing army, being the least military country in Europe. Until 1645 the war was mainly fought by armies made up of groups of tenants led by their landlord or his sons, or of the half-trained militia of the shires and the train-bands of London 'prentices. Hired soldiers, not bound by such natural loyalties, were more numerous

* School Atlas, Plate 36.

on the side of Parliament than on the king's side, but they were mostly incompetent. Until Cromwell began the creation of a real professional army, the king had a great advantage in the larger number of gentlemen, accustomed to riding, shooting, and hunting, who were at his disposal. For this reason cavalry played an altogether disproportionate part. The two pre-eminent leaders, Prince Rupert on the king's side, and Cromwell on the other, were both cavalry men.*

One feature of this civil war deserves comment. It was remarkably free from bitterness, until its later stages. There were no wholesale slaughters, such as the Wars of the Roses had produced, and no executions after victories.

2. The Course of the War (1642–1646)

The First Campaign.—In the first campaign,† the king began by marching to Shrewsbury, where he collected great numbers of recruits from the loyal western shires, and then set out for London. At *Edgehill* (October) he was met by the main parliamentary army, under the commander-in-chief, the Earl of Essex. The battle was drawn ; and both armies marched by different roads towards London. If Charles had struck hard, he might have mastered the city ; but, checked by earthworks at Turnham Green, which were held by the London train-bands, he turned back, and fixed his headquarters at Oxford, which became his main base of operations. Meanwhile local campaigns had been deciding the fortunes of various districts of the country. In the east the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, and Huntingdon organised themselves as the "Eastern Association," and raised an army of their own for the parliamentary side, under the command of the Earl of Manchester. Oliver Cromwell led the cavalry, and set himself to make his own regiment a model of efficiency and good discipline. In the far west the Royalists under Sir Ralph Hopton overcame all opposition in Cornwall and Devon, except the town of Plymouth, which held out staunchly for the Parliament. In the north there was hard fighting between the Royalists under the Duke of Newcastle and the Parliamentarians under the Fairfaxes, father and son ; but the Royalists had the better

* For all this, and later army developments, see Firth's *Cromwell's Army*.

† School Atlas, Plate 36*a*,

of it, and controlled all the north save Hull and the weaving districts of the West Riding and East Lancashire.

The Second Campaign.—The campaign of 1643 was still more favourable to the king. Hopton with his gallant Cornishmen swept eastwards, beating the Parliamentarians under Waller at *Lansdown* and *Roundway Down* (July), and made themselves masters of Bristol and the counties of Somerset, Wilts, Dorset, and Hampshire. But Plymouth and Portsmouth still held out ; and Gloucester, strong for Parliament, held the valley of the Severn. The king threw himself at Gloucester from Oxford. To relieve the faithful city, six strong regiments of Londoners set forth under Essex, and raised the siege. Charles intercepted their return march at *Newbury* (September), but failed to prevent them from getting through. The resistance of Gloucester had prevented the complete subjugation of the west ; while the resistance of Plymouth prevented Hopton from joining in a convergent march on London, which was planned for the autumn. Meanwhile in the north, Newcastle had beaten Fairfax at *Adwalton* (June), and driven him into Hull. He would have conquered Lincolnshire also ; but the army of the Eastern Association, and Cromwell's horse, beat him back at *Winceby*.

Irish Help for the King.—Thus the second campaign had brought no decision ; and although the king's cause had prospered, he was feeling the strain of finance far more severely than his foes. Both sides were anxious to get help from without. The king urged Ormond to make a truce with the Irish Catholics, and authorised him to hold out hopes of toleration. This " Cessation," negotiated in September, 1643, enabled Ormond to send over part of his army, and some Irish Catholics joined them.

Solemn League and Covenant.—On the other hand, Parliament approached the Scots, who would only give their aid subject to the acceptance of a Solemn League and Covenant, whereby the Presbyterian system was to be established in England (September 1643). The conclusion of this Treaty was the last work of " King Pym," who had hitherto directed affairs on the parliamentary side.

The Westminster Assembly.—An assembly of divines was already sitting at Westminster, to advise Parliament upon the reorganisation of the Church. It was now joined by Scottish representatives, and during the next four years the Assembly was engaged in drawing up a Confession of Faith on strictly Calvinistic lines, and two catechisms : the Shorter Catechism, though it

FIG. 22.—The Civil War.

never had much influence in England, was to become a vital factor in moulding the character of the Scottish people. The outlines of a Presbyterian organisation were also established during these years. Thus the Scottish alliance committed Parliament to the adoption of Presbyterianism. The Scots felt that the new English system was not strict enough; but it was much too strict for the English people, and the attempt to enforce it led to violent and important reactions.

Marston Moor and Lostwithiel.—The new forces brought into the field for the campaign of 1644 were of very different value; for while the Irish, who landed in Cheshire, were promptly scattered at Nantwich (January), the Scottish intervention was decisive. A Scottish army under Leslie marched southwards to join Fairfax in Yorkshire; the army of the Eastern Association, including Cromwell's Ironsides, moved northwards to join them. To save Newcastle from being overwhelmed, Prince Rupert was hastily sent north through Lancashire.* But he only arrived in time to share the disastrous and decisive defeat of *Marston Moor* † (July 1644), which caused the loss of the whole of the north to the king. ‡ The credit of this victory mainly fell to Cromwell; it established his position as the best general in the Parliamentary forces. § Meanwhile, the southern Parliamentary armies had driven Hopton out of Hampshire, and were overrunning Wiltshire and Somerset, when the king, striking from Oxford, got between them and London. Essex allowed himself to be driven westwards into Cornwall, where his army was destroyed, and all his infantry, guns, and stores were captured at *Lostwithiel* (September). To cover London, the northern army had to be hurried south, where it met the Royalists in the second battle of *Newbury*. The indecision of the commander, Lord Manchester, threw away what might have been a victory for the Parliament.

The New Model Army. — Marston Moor seemed to be balanced by Lostwithiel and Newbury; and this disappointment brought a crisis on the Parliamentary side, between those who were half-hearted and those who were for pressing towards a military

* His route is shown in School Atlas, Introduction, p. 25.

† Plan in School Atlas, Introduction, p. 25.

‡ School Atlas, Plate 36*b*.

§ The best of the many Lives of Cromwell is by C. H. Firth (Heroes of the Nations).

decision. It was evident that some of the Parliamentary leaders, and the peers who led the armies in the field, did not want to beat the king too decisively, because they were thinking always of the necessity of a settlement : in this very winter, they were carrying on negotiations. The more zealous soldiers, among whom the leading spirit was Cromwell, had no patience with these hesitations, and attacked the Parliamentary generals for deliberately protracting the war. The result was that Parliament came to two highly important decisions. In the first place, it adopted a *Self-denying Ordinance*, whereby members of both Houses gave up their military commands—an exception being made for Cromwell, the most successful general of the war. And in the second place it decided to raise a regular, professional army of 20,000 men in place of the militia, train-bands, voluntary levies, and other scratch forces which had hitherto been employed. Fairfax was made commander-in-chief, with Cromwell as his second-in-command. These decisions were of momentous importance. They turned the army into a separate force, more or less independent of Parliament, and having a mind of its own. And as, in recruiting for the New Model army, Cromwell and his colleagues paid no attention to the orthodoxy of their recruits, but asked only that the men should be good fighters and earnest in the cause, it was soon found that the new army was filled by enthusiasts and " sectaries " of an infinite variety, ready to scorn the rigid religious system which Parliament was pledged to enforce.

The Decisive Campaign.—On the military side, the results of the change were immediate. At *Naseby* * (June 1645) the new army, though so recently organised, utterly routed the king's main force ; and the midlands were lost. Then Fairfax went on to deal with the hitherto successful western army of the royalists, beat it at *Langport*, took Bristol, and undid all that Hopton had done. Naseby and Langport were decisive.

Montrose in Scotland.—For a moment a gleam of hope came in this year from the North, where the gallant Montrose, † gathering (like the Young Pretender long afterwards) a little army of Highlanders, had swept through the Highlands, and coming down into the Lowlands had beaten a considerable army at *Kilsyth* (August),

* Plan in School Atlas, Introduction, p. 25.

† There is a good short Life of Montrose by Mowbray Morris (English Men of Action).

seized Glasgow, and mastered the greater part of Scotland. For a moment Charles thought of joining him. But Montrose's army, like many other Highland hosts, melted after victory; and when Leslie returned with the Scottish army from the north of England, this gallant venture came to an end at *Philiphaugh* (September)—fought in the same month as Langport.

Charles Surrenders.—The king's cause was now desperate. Only a few outlying districts and castles held out for him, and their fall was certain. When, in the Spring of 1646, the Parliamentary armies prepared to besiege Oxford, he slipped away from that city, and surrendered himself to the Scots at Newark. So ended the first phase of the war. Parliament had won. But a settlement had still to be reached; and, as is always the case, the bitterness of war had doubled the difficulty of finding a reasonable and stable settlement.

3. Negotiations, Renewed War—and Regicide (1646–1649)

The Possibilities of Settlement.—Defeated in the field, Charles hoped still to get his way, by the subtler methods of negotiation, and by playing off the discordant groups of his enemies one against the other. If he had been capable of facing facts, and of acting with frankness and candour, he might have done much. For, with the exception of a few fanatics, the whole nation longed for peace. The mass of Englishmen wanted no revolutionary changes in Church or State. They wanted the old institutions of England, with the king ruling in concurrence with Parliament. Even the king's own followers would have been glad to accept the constitution as it had been defined in the first session of the Long Parliament, for they had not been fighting for the Divine Right of Kings; and all but a small minority of extremists would have been glad to accept the old settlement of the Church, with reasonable freedom for Puritans, and no High Commission Court to dragoon men's consciences. But Charles was congenitally incapable of seeing any but his own point of view, and his aim was, not to reach a reasonable settlement, but to get his own way by sowing dissension among his enemies.

The Scots: Parliament: the Army.—Unfortunately he had to deal with men of extreme views, whose attitude had been hardened (as always happens) by conflict. The *Scots* wanted, not merely a Presbyterian system for Scotland, but to force this system

upon England and Ireland, and they thought that a Scottish king ought to share their views. But they had no desire to dethrone their Scottish king, and they would probably have been content so long as the Kirk was free. The leaders in *Parliament*, having tasted power and proved their competence, were loth to abandon control; and having committed themselves to the Presbyterian view, were anxious to impose it on the nation. But they were afraid of the Army, which had become too much of an independent power in the State, and was honeycombed with revolutionary ideas. The *Army*, being full of arguing enthusiasts of various shades of belief, had come to the conclusion that toleration of differences was necessary, and was determined not to submit to the rigid discipline of the Presbyterians; it also included many—Cromwell was one of them—who would have liked to see a more logical and unified system of government for the three kingdoms; and some—Cromwell was decidedly not one of them—who dreamed of complete democracy and even equality of wealth; for ideas sprout like weeds in a time of revolution, when nothing seems fixed. The leaders of the Army (as distinct from the more excitable of their followers) were sane and practical men, accustomed to facing facts, and ready to accept any practical solution which promised a reasonable freedom of religion and a reasonable efficiency and stability of government.

Charles and the Scots.—Trying to play off these points of view one against the other, Charles first tried to win over the Scots. But he could not give a definite assurance that he would impose the complete Presbyterian system on England, though he tried to convey that impression. The Scots gave up the attempt to deal with him; and, after receiving their pay from Parliament, went home, leaving the king in the hands of Parliament, who placed him in honourable confinement at Holmby House, Northamptonshire.

Charles and Parliament. — Parliament's terms were that the king should surrender control over the army and navy for twenty years, take the Covenant, accept a Presbyterian system, and persecute the Roman Catholics. To these terms also Charles could not assent; and if he had frankly said so, he would have arrayed a great body of opinion on his side. He preferred evasive and illusory discussion, pinning his hopes on the outbreak of a quarrel between Parliament and the Army.

The Army takes Control.—This quarrel was steadily maturing, and it came to a height when in March 1647 Parliament

issued an ordinance disbanding the Army, all except a few regiments needed for service in Ireland—and did not even undertake to meet the arrears of pay. The Army refused to be disbanded, unless it was satisfied with the use that was made of the victory which it had won. It proceeded to elect two deputies or "agitators" from each regiment to form a directing committee—with the approval of Fairfax and Cromwell. Then, suddenly, Cornet Joyce with five hundred men appeared at Holmby House and carried off the king to the army headquarters at Newmarket. And, finally, the Army marched on London, and the Presbyterian leaders discreetly withdrew—leaving their Independent colleagues to negotiate with the king as the spokesmen of the Army chiefs.

"Heads of Proposals."—It was now the Army's turn to propose the terms of a settlement. Their "Heads of Proposals" (1647) were drafted by Cromwell and Ireton, and were extraordinarily reasonable. The episcopal system was to be restored in the Church, but there was to be toleration for all forms of Christian belief; there was to be an indemnity for all Royalists; and the king was to recover his military control after ten years. Here was at least a basis for discussion. But Charles would not accept it. He hoped that the fear of the Army and its heretical opinions, which was shared by the Scots and Parliament as well as by the defeated Royalists, would destroy the Army's power. He had been working secretly to bring about an invasion by the indignant Scots, in defence of Presbyterianism, and a simultaneous Royalist insurrection. In November 1647, he escaped from his gaolers to the Isle of Wight, where he was detained in Carisbrooke Castle. Thence new proposals came from him to both Army and Parliament; but they were only meant to gain time until a new war had been stirred up.

The Second Civil War.—In April 1648, the north-country Royalists raised the royal standard, and the Scots crossed the border. In May and June Royalist risings broke out in many parts of England —not only in Royalist Wales and Cornwall, but in Kent, which had been untouched by war, and even in the country of the Eastern Association. The king, rather than face the problem frankly, had deliberately stirred up a new war. But he had counted without the competence and vigour of the New Model Army. In less than three months all the risings were crushed. Fairfax stormed *Maidstone*, and routed the men of Kent; then he passed into the Eastern

Counties, where the insurgents were driven into *Colchester* and starved into surrender. Cromwell, meanwhile, after stamping out the Welsh rising, had swept north to meet the Scots and their northern Royalist allies. At *Preston* he defeated the straggling host (August); and in the next three days, by hard fighting, rounded up the whole army. The "Second Civil War" was over; and the Army marched back, vowing vengeance against "that man of blood" who had rekindled the embers of war.

Pryde's Purge.—This sealed Charles' fate. Cromwell and his leading colleagues (except Fairfax, who refused to accept any responsibility for what followed) had come to the decision that there was no use dealing with Charles: he must die. The king had been imprisoned in Hurst Castle on the Solent, and Parliament had started again the Penelope's web of negotiation. But on December 6th, 1648, as the members assembled, they were met in Westminster Palace Yard by soldiers under the command of Colonel Pryde, who arrested 41 of the Presbyterian leaders, ordered 96 more not to come near the House again, and left 60 Independents to constitute the House of Commons—60 of the 490 who had assembled at the opening of the Long Parliament eight years before. They came to be known as "the Rump." This was "Pryde's Purge."

Execution of Charles I.—The sixty had their orders. They passed a Bill to bring the king to trial for the treason of "levying war against Parliament and the realm of England," and appointed a High Court of Justice to conduct the trial. The Court, too, had its orders: it consisted largely of soldiers, who had come, not to apply the law, but to exact vengeance. In Westminster Hall, which had seen so many great events, the king was brought before his judges. He was never so kingly as at that moment. Denying that the Court was in any real sense a court of justice, or the Rump which had created it a Parliament, he stood proudly dumb, and listened to his preordained sentence. Three days later (January 30th, 1649), on a frosty morning, he walked out quietly from the window of his own Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, on to a scaffold beset with soldiers, and in the presence of a vast, awed crowd, laid his head upon the block. He was a man of many faults: he had strained the laws and imperilled the liberties of England. But his death was a negation of law; and, resting upon mere force, it was a denial of liberty, which depends upon law. His executioners did not destroy monarchy, as they thought to do; they sanctified it. A few days after Charles'

death there was published a little book, *Eikon Basilike*, which purported to give the reflections of the Royal Martyr in his last days. It had a profound effect; it was in vain that Milton tried to counter it with *Iconoclastes*. From the moment of the king's death, the tide of reaction, which had been rising since 1641, became irresistible; even the greatness of Cromwell and the strength of the finest Army England had ever known could only dam it for eleven years.

4. The Republic Triumphant (1649–1652)

The Rule of Force.—The only power which now survived in England was the Army. For the king had gone, and monarchy was abolished by a declaration of the Rump in February 1649; the House of Lords had ceased to sit, and it, too, was formally abolished at the same time; the House of Commons had been reduced to a wholly unrepresentative group of sixty men; and the vast majority of the nation was hostile to the men in power. The Army itself was threatened by mutiny, stirred up by Levellers and enthusiasts such as John Lilburne, who thought Cromwell a hypocrite and an apostate because he did not instantly ordain the establishment of complete democracy. Some of the Levellers had to be imprisoned—as arbitrarily as the Five Knights. In May 1649, there was a mutiny in three regiments, and the ringleaders had to be shot before it was suppressed.

Position of the Republic.—The new government was indeed surrounded by perils created by its own action. Every State in Europe was hostile, and English envoys were murdered in Holland and Spain: if the government had shown any weakness, there might have been a foreign invasion to restore the monarchy. Part of the fleet had already revolted in 1648. Under the command of Prince Rupert, it was welcomed in foreign ports, and preyed on English shipping. In Scotland the news that the Scottish king had been put to death aroused fierce indignation: the Scots promptly recognised the exiled Prince of Wales as Charles II, and invited him to return. In Ireland the king's execution transformed the situation. Ormond had, in despair, submitted to Parliament in 1647. After the king's death he reconstituted the Royalist party, made a league with the Catholics, and captured the remaining strongholds, all except Dublin. England itself was only held down by force. Only very able and resolute

action could redeem such a situation. But Cromwell was equal to the demand.

The Reconquest of Ireland.—His first attack was directed against Ireland, where he landed (with the rank of Lieutenant-Governor and Commander-in-Chief) in August 1649. He came as a minister of vengeance, but he had to reconquer the whole country. Landing at Dublin, he first turned north against *Drogheda*, which was garrisoned by Ormond's men. The town was stormed ; every soldier and every priest was put to death. Next he turned south against *Wexford*, and repeated his grim work. This method of terrorism had its effect, and towns surrendered without resistance. By the end of 1649 he controlled the whole of the east and south coasts. By May 1650, he had mastered three-fourths of the country. Recalled to deal with other dangers, he left the completion of his work to his lieutenants, Ireton and Ludlow. In May 1652, Galway, the last place to resist, surrendered. Ireland was more completely subjugated than it had ever been.

Overthrow of the Scots.—Meanwhile a crisis had arisen in Scotland, where Charles II had landed, and abjectly accepted the terms imposed upon him. The gallant Montrose had tried to save him from his complete dependence upon the Earl of Argyle, now the leader of the dominant party ; but Montrose had been captured, hanged, and dismembered (May 1650). The Scots were preparing to invade England. To anticipate them, Cromwell led an army into Scotland, and won a brilliant victory at *Dunbar* (September 1650). The Scots fell back behind Stirling ; whereupon Cromwell turned their flank by crossing the Firth of Forth, and captured Perth. But this left the way open to England. Led by Leslie, Cromwell's old comrade in arms at Marston Moor, and carrying Charles II with them, the Scots marched into England, hoping to be aided by Royalist insurrections. But the spell of the Army was too powerful, and there was no rising. Cromwell pursued the invaders as far as *Worcester*, where (September 1651) their army was annihilated. Half the nobility of Scotland were taken prisoners ; and Charles II had to skulk as a fugitive for seven weeks before he could escape to France. Meanwhile an army under George Monk was reducing Scotland to obedience. In May 1652, at the same moment as the surrender of Galway, Dunnottar Castle, the last Scottish fortress to resist, submitted to the conquerors.

Blake's Naval Triumphs.—Meanwhile the Republic had dis-

covered, in Robert Blake,* a commander at sea who was a compeer worthy of Cromwell. His first business was to deal with the Royalist fleet under Prince Rupert. He drove it from its Irish base at Kinsale (1649), where it had been working in co-operation with Ormond. When Rupert took refuge in the Tagus, Blake blockaded him there (1650); and when the king of Portugal refused him permission to attack his prey in Lisbon harbour, he attacked the Portuguese fleet returning from Brazil, sank three ships and captured seventeen with a rich cargo. When at length Rupert slipped out from the Tagus and made for the Mediterranean, Blake pursued him into those waters, where no English naval force had yet been seen, and destroyed his squadron at *Cartagena*, thus making the Republic secure upon the seas. Next year (1651) he captured the Scilly Isles, a Royalist refuge.

The Civil War was over. England, Scotland and Ireland—their old institutions destroyed, and their power of resistance annihilated—lay at the mercy of Cromwell and his colleagues, to re-shape according to their ideas.

CHAPTER XXII

THE COMMONWEALTH AND THE PROTECTORATE (1649–1660)

1. The Government of the Rump (1649–1653)

The New Government.—Pryde's Purge, and the execution of Charles I, left England under the absolute rule of the Rump, an irresponsible and irremovable group of men, whose power could not be checked or limited by any authority whatsoever, save only the Army. This was indeed an ironical result of a movement which had begun with protests against arbitrary power! Yet it cannot be denied that the rule of the Rump, which lasted for four and a half years (December 1648–April 1653) was extremely efficient: England had never known more competent government. The functions of the Privy Council were taken over by a Council of State of forty-one members, three-quarters of them members of Parliament; and the Council worked through a series of Committees, which included outside experts. Some of the members of this govern-

* There is a good short Life of Blake by David Hannay.

ing group were men of outstanding ability, notably Sir Harry Vane, who was especially interested in trade, naval, and colonial questions. One of the Secretaries of the Council was the poet, John Milton. To him fell the duty of defending the Republic against foreign critics, in a series of very able pamphlets. The Council raised and spent annually a revenue of about £2,000,000—three times as much as Charles I ever commanded. It was raised partly by new and efficient methods of taxation, which had been worked out during the war, and which constituted a lasting improvement of the English financial system ; but partly also by very heavy fines imposed upon the Royalists. These exactions, continued long after the war had ended, caused much bitterness, and provided one of the reasons why the English squirearchy—predominantly Puritan in the first half of the century—became violently anti-Puritan in the second half.

Law and Church Reforms.—Much of the good work done by the Rump has been credited to Cromwell, who at the most only continued what it had begun. Thus it was the Rump which appointed an expert commission, presided over by the great jurist Matthew Hale, to overhaul the legal system. The commission did excellent work, which was continued under the Protectorate ; but it was undone at the Restoration, and for the most part not resumed until the nineteenth century. Again, it was the Rump which (guided by the great Puritan divine, John Owen) found a solution for the religious problem. Local committees of Triers, including laymen, were empowered to appoint parish ministers, drawing no distinction between different shades of Protestant belief ; a travelling commission went round to eject incompetent ministers and schoolmasters ; and, with the exception of obstinate "prelatists" or "papists" (who were politically dangerous), freedom of worship was allowed to those who did not choose to attend the parish services. This was the nearest approach to religious toleration yet attempted in any European country.

The Navy Strengthened.—The most distinctive achievement of the Rump was its success in building up the Navy : it was the first English government to appreciate the importance of sea-power. A large part of its revenue was spent in building warships, the design of which was carefully studied : over two hundred vessels were added to the Navy between 1649 and 1660. And the administration of naval affairs, hitherto left to an aristocratic Lord High Admiral, was entrusted to a body in which experts and practical

seamen were included. It is customary to give Blake all the credit for the naval successes of this period; but even Blake could have done nothing without ships, and his victories were largely due to the improved design and equipment of the vessels of his fleet.

Trade and Colonial Policy. — The Rump may also be described as the first "imperialist" government of England; and it is significant that the title which it adopted for the republican commonwealth included, besides England, Scotland, and Ireland, their "dominions." The Rump sent out a fleet to enforce obedience upon Virginia and the West Indies, and maintained close relations with New England—where Sir Harry Vane had at one time dwelt. Finding that, since the beginning of the century, the Dutch had obtained an immense preponderance in shipping, so that ten Dutch vessels were said to visit the English colony of Barbados for every English vessel, it tried to remedy this by adopting, in 1651, a new *Navigation Act*. This Act provided that no goods should be carried to or from the British islands or the colonies except in British or colonial ships with British or colonial crews, or in ships of the countries from which the goods came. At first the Act inflicted considerable hardships upon the colonists by increasing the cost of transport; but in the long run it led to a great increase of British shipping. At the same time it struck a shrewd blow at the Dutch carrying trade; and, in conjunction with other causes of trouble, it led to a Dutch war, which broke out in 1652.

The First Dutch War.—The Dutch were at this period unquestionably supreme at sea, and they possessed, in Tromp and de Witt, the ablest admirals of the time. Yet, thanks to the way in which the English Navy had been built up, English fleets, led by Blake and other admirals, more than held their own in one of the most fiercely fought of naval wars. The battles of this war were, in fact, the first regular fleet-actions of the modern type, and they were very important in the development of naval tactics: there was little change in naval tactics between Blake and Nelson. The first important battle was fought off the mouth of the Thames, at *Kentish Knock** (1652), where Blake severely defeated de Witt. He was himself still more severely defeated, two months later, off *Dungeness*, by Tromp, who greatly outnumbered him. But the energetic admiralty so rapidly reorganised the fleet that in 1653 Tromp had

* See the map of the Narrow Seas, School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28.

to admit defeat in two great naval battles. The first, off *Portland* (February) was fiercely fought for three days ; in the second, off the *Gabbards* (Essex), about one hundred warships were engaged on each side (May). Between these two battles the government of the Rump was replaced by the Protectorate, which carried on the war for another year. The Dutch coast was blockaded for seven months, with very serious results for Dutch trade ; and in an attempt to break the blockade a final battle was fought off *Scheveningen*, in which Tromp was killed. The Dutch were glad to make peace in 1654 : the losses of their mercantile marine had been so severe that they were estimated at twice the value of the whole English mercantile marine. In the treaty of peace the United Provinces not only accepted the Navigation Act, but paid compensation for the outrage of Amboina, thirty years before. Dutch naval power had not been broken by this struggle ; but the English navy had at least established its equality with the Dutch navy ; and this result, though it was credited to Cromwell, was certainly due to the work of the Rump.

Dissolution of the Rump.—However successful, the irresponsible autocracy of the Rump could not last ; and as soon as the Army had returned from its triumphs in Ireland and Scotland, it was inevitable that a new system of government should be established. The Rump itself was the only body which could give a semblance of constitutional authority to a new system. Knowing the dangers of a free election, it proposed that a new Parliament should be constituted in which the members of the Rump would keep their places, and have the right of approving other persons elected : in other words, a self-renewing oligarchy was to be established. With this proposal the Army lost patience ; and on April 20th, 1653, Cromwell went down to the House, turned out the members, and removed "that bauble," the Mace—the emblem of the last relics of constitutional authority left in England. Nothing remained save the power of the sword, the dictatorship of the Army : to this strange conclusion had come the movement that began by defending the sovereignty of law !

2. Constitutional Experiments

Oliver Cromwell.—The whole of the British Islands had been reduced to obedience by the Army, which was now the sole remaining sovereign power ; and the trusted master of the Army was

Oliver Cromwell. Never in the history of the British peoples has one man wielded such power. He was now fifty-four years old. Up to the age of forty-two he had been a country gentleman of modest fortune, an earnest Puritan, but almost unknown beyond his own neighbourhood. He had played his part in the first sessions of the Long Parliament, but not as a leader, because he lacked the gifts of a parliamentarian. Then war had revealed in him great qualities of mind and character—a firm resolution, a power of seizing essentials, an assured self-confidence, a controlled enthusiasm—which made him a natural leader. Without military training, he had shown himself to be not merely the greatest commander in the war, but perhaps the greatest natural soldier whom England had ever produced ; and he was to show himself also a very great administrator. In his character strong practical sense was blended with a vein of mysticism. He had wrestled too hard before he reached his own convictions not to respect the honest convictions of others, and this made him a believer in toleration. He hated shams and insincerities ; but he could not see that what seemed shams to him were often, for others, rooted in deep sentiments : the sanctity of the king, for one example ; the tradition of Parliament, for another. He had swept both aside when they seemed to him to stand in the way of truth. But in doing so he had outraged sentiments which were stronger even than his will, stronger than his Army. He knew that no system of government, however efficient, can long survive unless it rests upon the consent of the governed. He had alienated the sentiments from which consent had sprung ; he spent the rest of his life in striving to find a system that would win consent. He failed, and knew that he had failed ; but he never shirked his task. He has been described as a hypocrite, greedy of power. Nothing could be more untrue. He was one of the greatest of Englishmen.

Various Plans.—Three different views as to the new frame of government had supporters in the Army. One was the view of the Levellers—that a complete system of democracy should at once be instituted. This was never seriously considered : had it been tried, the immediate result would have been a restoration of the old regime. Another was the view of the religious fanatics, led by General Harrison ; they wanted to establish a Bible Commonwealth, under the rule of the Saints. The third was the view of the more statesmanlike officers, men like Ireton and Lambert, who wanted to make a clean, logical, efficient system of government for the united realm of Great Britain and Ireland.

The Rule of the Saints.—The vein of mysticism in Cromwell led him to try first the Rule of the Saints. He summoned an assembly of 140 godly men, carefully selected (July 1653). Their Speaker was the Provost of Eton; but they were known in derision as "Barebone's" Parliament, after one of their members, a godly leather-seller who bore the proud name of "Praise-God Barbon." At the first meeting Cromwell spoke in a vein of exaltation: "this may be the door to usher in the things that God hath promised. . . . Indeed, I do think something is at the door." But the experiment was a failure. The Saints were not practical. They tried to do everything at once. After five months of confusion, Cromwell's practical side reasserted itself, and he was glad to accept the resignation offered to him by a group of the more rational members, who met in a hurry in the morning, before the hotheads had come down.

The Instrument of Government.—The next experiment (December 1653) was a constitution drawn up by the leading officers, and drafted by Lambert: the *Instrument of Government*. England, Scotland, Ireland, and the colonies, united in a single Commonwealth, were to be governed by an elected Parliament of one House, and an executive consisting of a Lord Protector, chosen for life, and a Council of State. The Lord Protector was to have a fixed revenue, which should only be exceeded with the approval of Parliament; subject to this, and to the laws made by Parliament, he was to have independent control of government: in short, the system was to be very like the modern American constitution. Parliament was to meet at least once every three years, and to sit for at least five months. In the election of Parliament Scotland and Ireland were included; and all the anomalies of the old electoral system were swept away, seats being assigned in proportion to the wealth and population of the various districts. The franchise was limited to men owning property to the value of £200 or more. The Constitution was to be unalterable. This was a very skilful piece of constitution-making, and it should have succeeded if any "paper" constitution could. But it owed its authority solely to the Army Council. And who were the Army Council that they should dictate for all time the constitution of the British Peoples?

Breakdown of the System.—From the first the system would not work. When the first Parliament met (September 1654), the members felt that the mere fact of election gave them a better authority than the Army Council could claim. A hundred members

were excluded for refusing to promise not to alter the constitution. Even the remnant was as troublesome as Charles I's Parliaments had been. They wanted to reduce the size of the Army! At the earliest possible moment Cromwell dissolved Parliament, for all the world like Charles I.

The Major-Generals.—During the next year, the government of the Protector was threatened by a series of risings—risings of Royalists in England, of Scots, of Levellers who considered that Cromwell had betrayed liberty, of Fifth Monarchy men who wanted the rule of the Saints. He dealt with this unrest by establishing military rule in a form which was never forgotten or forgiven. Ten major-generals, with military forces at their disposal, were placed in control of ten areas, with large police powers. Their expenses were met by an income-tax levied from the Royalists. This experience made England hate the very name of a standing army. During this period taxes were levied without parliamentary authority, and judges were turned out for questioning the Protector's authority. One merchant named Cony (like Bate in James I's time) refused to pay customs duties not imposed by Parliament, in defiance of the Act of 1641. He and his lawyers were thrown into the Tower. Beyond question, the government of the Protector was far more arbitrary than that of Charles I had ever been. He was, in truth, a military despot, like Napoleon Buonaparte, and like Napoleon he was very efficient. But if he had taken a popular vote, as Napoleon did, he would not have received the support which Napoleon obtained.

The Humble Petition and Advice.—In 1656 Cromwell made a last attempt to base his power upon parliamentary authority. A second Parliament—carefully packed by the Major-Generals—was summoned under the Instrument of Government. This time it was permitted to discuss the constitution; and the result was a new scheme, called the *Humble Petition and Advice* (1657), the essence of which was an attempt to return as nearly as possible to the old monarchical system. Cromwell was even asked to assume the title of King, and but for the opposition of the Army he would have been willing to do so. In any case, he was to have the powers of the old monarchy, together with the power of nominating his successor. There was also to be a Second Chamber, consisting of life-peers nominated by the Protector, to take the place of the House of Lords. The scheme was accepted. But it, too, would not work. Cromwell's staunchest supporters went to the new Second Chamber. The

reconstituted House of Commons insisted upon challenging the Second Chamber, and upon reopening the whole constitutional question. Once again, Cromwell dissolved his Parliament in disgust (February 1658); and seven months later he was dead, having utterly failed to find or make any popular basis for his power. The government of one of the ablest men who have ever ruled England was vitiated, and all his good work was made futile and evanescent, by the mere fact that the source of its authority was force and not law, and that it disregarded the sentiments and traditions of the nation.

Cromwell and Scotland.—Still more evanescent was the work which Cromwell did in Scotland. He reduced it to order; even the wild Highlands were kept at peace by his garrisons. He gave it (as a consequence of union) freedom of trade with England and her colonies, and this led to a substantial growth of prosperity. But the burden of taxation which he imposed was heavy, and nothing could overcome the fact that his was an alien rule, created by conquest and maintained by force. Its disappearance was welcomed, and it left no permanent mark.

Cromwell and Ireland.—The only part of the British realms upon which Cromwell's government left an indelible mark was Ireland; and there he left a memory of hatred, deeper than all the earlier memories of conquest and dispossession. This was because his policy was inspired by religious venom. His aim was to limit the Irish Catholic population to Connaught, and in the other three provinces to replace them by godly Englishmen. So irresistible was his power that he was in fact able to dispossess the Catholics of nearly all their land in the three provinces, and many English settlers were introduced.* But he could not pen the Irish into Connaught; they came to the other provinces, with bitterness in their hearts, to labour on lands that had once been theirs. And in a very short time they succeeded in turning into Irishmen the sons of Cromwell's settlers. He tried to stamp out Catholicism by hunting down the priests and by introducing Protestant missionaries. But he had no success; he only made the Irish more Catholic than ever because Protestantism was the religion of the oppressor. Two centuries after his death "the curse of Cromwell" was still the bitterest malediction that an Irishman could call down upon his enemy.

* School Atlas, Plate 39*c*.

3. Cromwell's Foreign Policy

An Out-of-date Policy.—Though it was a failure at home, the Protectorate raised the prestige of England abroad to the highest point it had ever reached. Yet even here it must be acknowledged that, on a long view, Cromwell's policy was a failure. Cromwell's initial idea was to go back to what he conceived Elizabeth's policy to have been—that of fighting for the supremacy of Protestantism. Hence he made haste to bring to a close the Rump's war with the Dutch, and strove to form a League of the Protestant powers. The attempt was a complete failure, because religion was no longer the real cause of division in European politics. The only service he was able to render to Protestantism was that he got France to bring pressure upon Savoy to stop the persecution of the Waldensian Protestants.

Rivalry of France and Spain.—The outstanding fact in Europe was the intense rivalry of France and Spain, two Catholic powers. In the later stages of the Thirty Years' War the power of France had seemed to be securely established, and Spain had sunk to the second rank. But at the time of the conclusion of that war by the Treaties of Westphalia * (1648) France was afflicted with internal discords, which persuaded Spain that it was worth while carrying on the struggle; and the Franco-Spanish war was not concluded until the Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659. If England meant to play an active part in European affairs, she must take sides in this conflict. On any broad view of European politics, the most important fact was the formidable growth of the power of France, which was soon to become, under Louis XIV, an even more serious menace to the liberty of Europe and of England than the power of Charles V or Philip II had ever been. But Cromwell, dominated by the old ideas of foreign policy which had prevailed before England had dropped out of European affairs in 1629, could not see this. He thought of Spain as the "ancient enemy" of Protestantism and of England.

Filibustering Raids.—The true British policy at this period would have been to hold aloof from the war, for there was no British interest directly involved. But Cromwell was anxious to do something brilliant to raise his prestige, and he was something of a Jingo.

* School Atlas, Plate 16.

Both of the rival powers sued for his alliance. While the negotiations went on (1654) he sent out three naval expeditions to establish the fame of British arms. One, under Blake, went into the Mediterranean to deal with the "Barbary corsairs"—the pirates of Tunis and Algiers: it was brilliantly successful, destroyed the pirate fleet at Tunis, and forced the Dey of Algiers to release all his British captives and grant freedom of trade. A second expedition was designed to conquer the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam (New York); but peace being concluded with the Dutch, this force was deliberately turned against the French colony of Acadia, which was conquered and occupied—in spite of the fact that England was not merely at peace with France, but negotiating an alliance with her. France passed over this monstrous violation of international right because she wanted Cromwell's help. The third expedition—a fleet under Admiral Penn and an army under General Venables—was sent, without any declaration of war, to seize the rich island of Hispaniola the centre of the Spanish power in the West Indies. The attack on Hispaniola failed, but *Jamaica** was conquered (1655)—the first British possession taken from another European power. When he heard of the failure at Hispaniola, Cromwell observed that "the Lord hath greatly humbled us"; but he urged the attackers of Jamaica to "set up your banners in the name of Christ, for undoubtedly it is His cause."

The War with Spain.—These purely piratical expeditions were the preamble to a war with Spain, in alliance with France. Blake's greatest triumphs were won in this war: he blockaded Cadiz (1656), and in 1657, attacking *Santa Cruz* in Teneriffe where the Spanish treasure fleet was anchored under the forts, he silenced the forts and destroyed the whole fleet. British naval prestige was raised to a pinnacle by these achievements. Next year, on land, a contingent of English troops played a leading part in winning a final and decisive victory for France over Spain in the battle of the *Dunes* (1658), and for a time Dunkirk became a British possession. But the main result of the battle was to establish the European supremacy of France, which so gravely menaced the liberties of the world in the next generation. Dazzling as its immediate results were, the foreign policy of Cromwell, inspired by purely militarist ideas, was wholly mistaken.

* School Atlas, Plates 48*a* and *b*.

4. The Collapse of the Puritan Republic

Abolition of the Protectorate.—When this great man died, the unnatural power which his genius alone had maintained swiftly collapsed. His son, Richard Cromwell, succeeded him without opposition, and a new Parliament was elected. But republican intrigues were at work in the Army. A demand was put forward that a commander-in-chief, independent of the Protector, should be appointed with power to select all officers. Ere long the Protector was forced to dismiss Parliament, which was showing hostility to the Army (April 1659). Next month the Rump was restored. It promptly declared the Protectorate abolished; and Richard Cromwell retired into private life, after nine months of impotence.

Revolt against Military Rule.—But the old quarrel between the Rump and the Army soon revived; and meanwhile, the strong hand of Oliver being gone, a Royalist rising broke out in Cheshire. This was easily repressed; and in October the Rump was once more expelled, and the Army chiefs formed a Committee of Safety to carry on the government. This led, however, to loud protests. The fleet in the Downs, the army in Ireland, and (most serious of all) Monk,* the able general of the army in Scotland, declared for Parliament against mere military rule; upon which the Army chiefs took fright, and once more recalled the Rump (December). The Rump thereupon called upon Monk to protect it; and Monk arrived in February, to find London in a state of high excitement. The next step was to undo Pryde's Purge, and go back to 1648; and in February the Long Parliament resumed its sessions. It promptly declared that everything done since 1648 had been illegal, restored the Solemn League and Covenant, and decreed the election of a new Parliament.

The Restoration.—The new Parliament (known as the Convention because it had not been properly summoned by a king) was elected on the old basis. It had a Presbyterian majority, and a strong Anglican minority. The House of Lords also met. Meanwhile Monk had been in negotiation with the exiled Charles II, who, in April, issued the *Declaration of Breda*, in which he promised a

* There is a good short Life of Monk by Julian Corbett (English Men of Action).

general pardon, liberty to "tender consciences," and arrears of pay to the Army. On May 8th he was solemnly proclaimed king. On May 24th he landed at Dover; and on May 29th he rode into London, amid the frenzied welcomes of a crowd whose fathers had formed the backbone of the resistance to Charles I.

Results of the Puritan Revolution.—So easily and so rapidly collapsed the Puritan Republic, once the strong hand of Oliver was removed; and the only break in the continuity of English political development was ended. So ended eighteen years of revolution by violence. What had been the result of this period? Nothing of all the good work that had been done since 1641 survived: the only permanent results were those which were attained constitutionally, by agreement and not by force. The English were left with a deep fear and hatred of standing armies, and with a conviction that the old ways were best; and the later Stewarts traded upon this feeling, to their ultimate undoing. The Puritan sentiment, which had been strong before the revolution, was greatly weakened, and henceforward the Puritans were mere sectaries, regarded with dislike and contempt, especially by the all-powerful landowning class, in which they had once been so strong. Yet, even as sectaries, they remained numerous; they continued to be a wholesome element in English life, stubbornly upholding a view different from the prevailing doctrines, and forming always the nucleus of an opposition. And such a nucleus was to be very necessary, because the result of eighteen years of violence and confusion was to make men feel the danger of resisting and weakening authority. "The Divine Right of Kings" got a new lease of life. Even during the Commonwealth the trenchant pen of Hobbes had argued forcibly that an unlimited sovereign power was essential in every State if Society was not to be dissolved in anarchy. The struggle for political liberty, won in 1640, had to be fought over again, this time by constitutional means, because the use of violence gave strength to the forces of reaction.

Change of Temper.—The Puritan revolution seemed to have failed. But it had left an indelible mark upon the mind and temper of the English people. This had already been shown in the realm of literature. The exuberant vitality of the Elizabethan age had come to an end with the rise of the great controversy; the stream of dramatic literature had been suddenly stopped when stage-plays were prohibited in 1642; and the literature of the Puritan period—

whether produced by men of Puritan or of Anglo-Catholic outlook—had taken a graver and more serious cast. Now another change was to come. Gravity had been overdone; in many cases it had degenerated into hypocrisy. The Puritan temper was, indeed, still alive, and it received its noblest expression, after the Restoration, in Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. But the prevailing temper of the time was lighter, more cynical, and free from moral restraints.

CHAPTER XXIII

CHARLES II AND THE RESTORATION (1660–1678)

1. The Restoration Settlement in England, Scotland and Ireland

The Three Kingdoms Separated.—The first result of the Restoration was that it automatically brought to an end the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland which the Commonwealth had enforced; and there had to be a distinct settlement in each of the three countries. All three welcomed the return to the old division, though both Scotland and Ireland lost by it, especially in the cessation of freedom of trade with England and the colonies. The work of settlement fell to three statesmen who had played an important part in the troubles—Clarendon in England, Lauderdale in Scotland, and Ormond in Ireland. The only unifying factor was the king; and although Charles II was an astute politician who could not be disregarded, he was also a lazy and pleasure-loving man, quite content to leave the brunt of the work to other people.

Character of Charles II.—Charles II was strangely unlike the other kings of his House. He had none of the blinkered obstinacy which marked alike his grandfather, his father, and his brother. In 1660 he was thirty years old—a good-humoured, witty, easy-going libertine, who had no principles, no beliefs, and no sense of honour. Having suffered great inconveniences during fourteen years of exile, he meant to have a pleasant life, and to avoid "going on his travels again." He envied the unrestrained power and almost limitless wealth of his cousin Louis XIV, and would have been glad to be free from the irksome restraints of Parliament. But he was not going to

run any risks ; and he had too keen a sense of humour to take himself seriously as the Lord's Anointed. He was cynically and shamelessly immoral, and a corrupter of the morals of all who haunted his gay and frivolous court—even in an age when there was in any case a reaction against the starched virtue of the previous age, whether Puritan or Anglo-Catholic. Charles had, in truth, no religious beliefs. No doubt he thought the Roman Church the most convenient for a king ; and on his deathbed he declared himself a Catholic. But he was really a sceptic ; he did not care enough about any beliefs to be a persecutor. He never lost his temper ; he understood men's baser motives ; he was naturally shrewd and clever ; and when he took a hand in the amusing game of political intrigue, these qualities made him a much more dangerous player than his father or his brother. But in the meantime, he was content to leave business to the old fogeys who enjoyed it.

Clarendon.—In England the work fell mainly to Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, an upright and serious-minded statesman of the old school, whose demeanour was a rebuke to the flippant court. Clarendon had been one of the members of the Long Parliament in its first days of unanimity, and he looked back to the settlement reached in 1641 as the perfection of the English constitution. He aimed at restoring the balance between the power of king and Parliament which he believed to have been then established. In religion he was an Anglican, but not a fanatical Laudian, and he would have been glad to reach an accommodation with the more reasonable Puritans. He was statesman enough not to be governed by rancour.

The Convention.—While the Convention was sitting, Clarendon strove to reach a reasonable settlement. To the disgust of ardent Royalists, only fourteen lives were taken—those of the regicides who had been members of the illegal court which condemned Charles I. Clarendon cannot have liked the grim and futile vengeance which took Cromwell's body from its grave to be gibbeted, for he warmly admired much of Cromwell's work. He was responsible for an *Act of Indemnity and Oblivion*, which the Royalists keenly resented, though it was a fulfilment of the Declaration of Breda ; and he assented to, and defended against all attacks, a settlement of the land question whereby, while royal and Church estates confiscated since 1641 were resumed, private estates which had been sold during the troubles to raise money for the king or to pay fines

imposed by the Rump were left in the hands of their actual possessors. Clarendon was endeavouring to bring about an accommodation in the Church, at a *Savoy Conference* of Anglican and Puritan divines, when the Convention came to an end, and (May 1661) new elections returned a Parliament overwhelmingly "Cavalier" in complexion.

The Cavalier Parliament.—The new Parliament, which is known as the Long Parliament of the Restoration, and which sat for nearly eighteen years, largely took the settlement out of Clarendon's hands, and made it clear that it was not only the king that had been restored, but the Royalist gentry, who had suffered many things at the hands of the Puritans and meant to have their vengeance, and the Anglican parsons, who had been ousted from their livings. There was a close alliance between the gentry and the parsons now—not so much to carry out the theories of Laud as to put the Puritans in their place.

The Political Settlement.—On the political side, indeed, this Parliament was at one with Clarendon. It declared that no laws could be passed without the king's assent, and that war against the king was treason. But this was sound constitutional doctrine. It also reaffirmed the decisions of the first session of the Long Parliament, endorsing the abolition of Star Chamber, High Commission, and the other prerogative courts, and passing a new *Triennial Act* to ensure that there should be no more government without Parliament. Moreover, it accepted the new financial system (including excise duties) which had been worked out during the war, and did not dream of going back on the Tunnage and Poundage Act, or allowing the king to levy impositions at his will. It voted an annual income of £1,200,000 to the king for life; but only on condition that the old feudal dues should be abolished—the last element of taxation that had remained outside the power of Parliament. Royalist and anti-Puritan as it was, the Restoration Parliament had no intention of yielding up its power; and, as we shall see, it was often a very troublesome body during its long life.

Persecution of the Puritans.—But when it came to the religious settlement, the Cavalier Parliament would have no compromise. Political Puritanism was to be reduced to impotence; and the fierce group of laws known (quite unfairly) as the "Clarendon Code" was the result. Its first item was the *Corporation Act* (1661) designed to destroy the power of the Puritans in the towns, where their strength had been greatest. This Act required every member

of a municipal corporation to abjure the Covenant and to receive Holy Communion according to Anglican rites : the most solemn of the sacraments being thus employed as a political test. Next followed the *Act of Uniformity* (1662). The Prayer-book (slightly revised, in a sense hostile to the Puritans) and the Thirty-nine Articles were declared to be the rule of faith, and every clergyman was to vacate his benefice unless he declared assent to them and accepted episcopal ordination before a fixed date ; while every university professor and every school teacher was required to obtain a certificate of orthodoxy from his bishop. On the day fixed—St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662—more than 2,000 ministers left their benefices rather than take the oaths. How many of their parishioners followed them it is impossible to say, but the number was certainly large. Henceforth the Dissenters or Nonconformists were always a substantial element in the nation, which was divided into a privileged and an unprivileged, a dominant and an oppressed class. Moreover, exclusion from schools and universities meant that while many Puritans had been learned and highly cultivated men, the Dissenters tended to be marked off by their lack of culture, which is the profoundest kind of cleavage. In 1663 the king tried to obtain some powers of granting toleration (he had promised " liberty to tender consciences " in the Declaration of Breda). The reply of Parliament was the *Conventicle Act* (1664) which imposed sharp penalties upon any religious meeting of more than four persons beyond the members of a family. It was under this Act (which filled the gaols) that John Bunyan spent the years in Bedford Gaol during which he wrote the *Pilgrim's Progress*. One final enormity was still to come. In 1665, during the dreadful Plague of London, many dissenting ministers courageously returned to tend their former flocks. Thereupon Parliament (safe at Oxford) passed the *Five Mile Act* which forbade any minister who had not taken the oaths under the Act of Uniformity to live within five miles of a corporate borough, or of a place where he had ministered.

Effects of the Persecution.—These vindictive Acts were designed to destroy Puritanism. They failed to do so, for two reasons. In the first place, very large numbers took the oaths without changing their opinions or their sympathies ; these became the Low Church party in the Church of England. In the second place, the brave men who refused to take the oaths were still numerous, and their cruel plight led to various attempts to relieve them, culminating, after thirty years, in the establishment of Toleration. The

chief distinguishing mark between political parties came, indeed, to be sympathy with or hostility to the Dissenters. It may have been, in the long run, a good thing for England that the Dissenters were thus marked off: they kept the nation from stagnating in an enforced and deadening uniformity such as killed the intellectual life of Spain and Italy.

Censorship of the Press.—One other Act ought to be included with this group, though it was not exclusively aimed at the Puritans. Since 1641 a complete freedom of the Press had existed in England, and this had been one of the noblest achievements of the Puritans. In 1662 a *Licensing Act* imposed a strict censorship; and though the Act was only for two years, it was regularly renewed until 1679, and was not finally withdrawn until 1695.

The Restoration in Scotland.—In Scotland the Restoration Settlement went back farther than in England. A *Rescissory Act* (1661), passed by a very obsequious Parliament, cancelled all legislation since the Edinburgh coronation of Charles I in 1633, including Laud's canons and liturgy. In effect Scotland returned to the conditions which had existed under James I. Parliament voted the king a substantial revenue for life, which made it possible to maintain a small standing army. Through a nominated Privy Council, the king's agent, Lord Lauderdale, wielded almost autocratic power. The Lords of the Articles, also nominated, ensured the subservience of Parliament. In the Church, the bishops of James I were restored, and, though Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries still met, the General Assembly, that formidable body, was never summoned. The nobles, tired of the dictatorship of the Kirk, welcomed this compromise, and the greater part of the country accepted it, willingly or unwillingly.

Resistance of the Covenanters.—But in the south-west—Lanark, Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway—three hundred ministers refused to submit to episcopacy, and, in defiance of Conventicle Acts, insisted upon holding services for their followers. These unbending Covenanters were known as the Westland *Whigs*. Troops were sent to deal with them, and billeted in their houses. The result was a forlorn rising, which began in Galloway: a handful of rebels, marching on Edinburgh, was crushed at *Rullion Green*, in the Pentlands (1666), and there were many executions. For a time, after this, Lauderdale tried more moderate measures; but when this failed to get rid of the Conventicles, a fierce persecution, the bitterest

yet seen in Britain, began in 1676. Its consequences will be discussed later. Thus to Scotland the Restoration brought political absolutism backed by an army, the destruction of the freedom of the Kirk, and (in one part of the country) cruel persecution.

The Restoration in Ireland.—In Ireland the loyal Duke of Ormond, who belonged, like Clarendon, to the old regime, strove for conciliation. His most difficult task was to deal fairly with the results of the wholesale confiscations of land which Cromwell had carried out. It was found impossible completely to undo their results. But under two *Acts of Settlement* (1662 and 1665) some attempt was made to redress the wrong. In the event, about one-third of the land of Ireland was restored to Irish Catholic proprietors, one-third remained in possession of the grantees under earlier plantations, and one-third was kept by Cromwell's grantees. The result was that a great majority of the Irish Catholics were left to work as labourers on the lands their ancestors had owned. Many of them took to the wilds and became outlaws. They were known as *Tories*. But, on the whole, Ireland settled down under the new regime. Ormond abstained from harassing the Catholics ; and there was a considerable development of prosperity. The Irish Parliament, which seldom met, and which mainly represented the Protestant domination, was very amenable, and voted to the king a substantial revenue for life, which enabled him to maintain an army.

Military Resources of the Crown.—Thus in Scotland and Ireland the power of the crown was greatly increased by the Restoration, while in England the king had to submit to serious restraints from Parliament. In Scotland and Ireland he possessed standing armies, such as Charles I had never possessed—if he had, despotism might have been riveted upon the British peoples. In England also there was a small force of Guards for the protection of the king, and certain regiments, hired out to the Dutch, were available in case of need : these are the oldest regiments of the British Army. But these forces were kept in the background. The English people had learnt to dread standing armies ; and although the Cavalier Parliament, by the *Militia Act*, restored to the king supreme control over the military forces of the country, it assumed that these would be limited, as in the good old days, to the untrained levies of the shires.

2. Imperial Development: the Old Colonial System

There are three main threads of interest in the politics of the Restoration period. The first is the gradual emergence of two political parties, and of a constitutional conflict which became acute in 1678, and ten years later led to the Revolution. The second is the growing interest of foreign politics, due to the rise of the overwhelming power of France under Louis XIV. The third is the development of the oversea Empire. All three were closely interrelated. But the third, imperial development, can perhaps be most easily disentangled from the others, and considered separately.

Colonial Rivalries.—The second half of the seventeenth century was a period in which the Powers of western Europe were all beginning to take a serious interest in oversea possessions, and to frame their policy largely with a view to them. The Dutch were still preponderant in oversea trade, but they were concentrating their attention more and more upon the East. In 1652 they had planted a modest settlement at *Cape Town*, as a calling station on the way to the East. Portugal, having (1640) regained her independence, was actively developing her great empire in Brazil. Spain, in spite of her decadence, was extending her dominions in the New World, and was soon to establish herself in California. But the great new factor in the colonial sphere was France, who, under her able minister Colbert, was building up a powerful navy, starting trade with India, and systematically developing the struggling French settlements in Canada and the West Indies. It was in this period that French explorers discovered the Mississippi * and the Ohio rivers, and laid claim to the vast central plain of the North American continent. France was becoming a serious competitor for oversea empire, and this inevitably brought about a keen rivalry with England. But at first this was not apparent: as in the Commonwealth period, the Dutch seemed, until 1668, to be still the most dangerous commercial and colonial rivals of England.

Colonial Policy of the Restoration.—The government of Charles II inherited from the Commonwealth a keen interest in oversea questions. Clarendon profoundly admired the work of Cromwell in this field. The navy was vigorously maintained, and

* School Atlas, Plate 50. There is a special map for American Exploration in the larger Atlas, Plate 51.

the king's brother, James Duke of York, who was Lord High Admiral, took his duties very seriously. All the leading statesmen of the Restoration, notably Clarendon and the old Cromwellian Ashley (afterwards Lord Shaftesbury), took a keen interest in colonial questions. A Council of Trade and Plantations was established at the beginning of the reign, and a definite imperial policy was laid down. The chief feature of this was an attempt to make England the central market of the whole empire. The *Navigation Act* of 1660 (supplemented by several later Acts) not only limited inter-imperial trade to British and colonial ships, it made a list of "enumerated articles"—products of the colonies—which could only be exported to England; and one of the later Acts (1664) provided that all foreign goods intended for the colonies should be sent through England. Thus England was to become the economic centre of the whole empire. A second feature of the imperial system was that full self-governing rights were given to all the colonies as a matter of course; and in this respect the English colonies stood alone. Charters were granted even to the Puritan colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island in 1662 and 1663, which fully confirmed their existing practice; and in 1661 Jamaica—conquered only six years before—was endowed with a representative assembly. In all the colonies, also, full liberty of conscience was allowed. There was great activity in the creation of new colonies.* In 1663 Clarendon, Shaftesbury, Monk, and others obtained a patent to found the colony of *Carolina*, which (with its capital, Charlestown) was named after the King; and the philosopher Locke was employed to draw up a model constitution—which proved to be unworkable. In 1670 the *Bahama Islands* were annexed.

The Second Dutch War.—In 1664 an attack was directed against the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam, which lay between New England and the Southern English colonies: Cromwell had already projected such an enterprise. This was the beginning of the *Second Dutch War*, which was purely a war for trade and colonies. It was very fiercely fought. Though Blake was dead, he had worthy successors in Monk and Prince Rupert. In two hard-fought battles, off *Lowestoft* † in 1665, and in the *Downs* in 1666, the English fleet held its own. To prevent a complete English victory, Louis XIV

* School Atlas, Plates 49*a* and 48*a*.
† School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28.

entered the conflict on the side of the Dutch, and there was hard fighting between English and French forces in the West Indies. The later stages of the war were less fortunate. The Great Plague of 1665 affected part of the fleet; the Great Fire of London in 1666 disorganised supply; there was a shortage of funds, partly owing to the king's extravagance, partly to the fact that Parliament was stingy; and the fleet had to be laid up in the winter of 1666. In 1667 the Dutch seized their chance, sailed up the Medway, captured one ship and burnt three others, and almost attacked London. But this was only a momentary set-back; as the Dutch evidently realised, for in the same year (1667) they made peace, and ceded New Amsterdam.

The Middle Colonies.—This valuable colony, which commanded the great inland waterway of the Hudson River, was handed over to the Duke of York, after whom it was christened *New York*.* On the other side of the Hudson River from New York, the Duke granted a wide extent of territory to Sir George Carteret, a Jersey man, who established the colony of *New Jersey*, where many Quakers (persecuted in England) were freely welcomed. Farther south the little colony of *Delaware* was later organised, on land that had been first settled by the Swedes, and then conquered from them by the Dutch. Finally, in 1681, the Quaker William Penn was given a huge grant of territory on the far side of the Delaware, in payment of a debt due to his father. Here he founded the model colony of *Pennsylvania*, which attracted a stream of emigrants because it was known as the freest and most liberal of all the colonies. Thus a complete series of English colonies occupied the coast of North America from Maine to Carolina. But this was not all. In 1670 the *Hudson's Bay Company* was founded, with Prince Rupert as its governor, to develop a fur trade with the Indian tribes in the wild country north of the French colonies. The French asserted that this was illegitimate; and here was a cause of quarrel in the future.

Africa and India.—Although the main English activities in this period were in North America, a good deal of vigour was shown in other regions also. In 1662 an African company was organised to exploit the lucrative slave-trade of West Africa—a trade in which every maritime country eagerly participated without any sense of wrong; and trading posts were maintained on the *Gambia* and on the

* School Atlas, Plate 49*a*.

Gold Coast.* Finally, the East India Company saw in this period a remarkable development. In 1661 it obtained by charter the right to coin money, raise garrisons, and exercise jurisdiction : it was getting ready for its great career. And in 1668 it obtained its first territorial possession. Charles II had married a Portuguese princess, and as part of her dowry the island of *Bombay* was transferred to the king, who sold it to the East India Company. Thus in all directions this was a period of very active imperial development. It was, in fact, the period during which the imperial system that came to an end with the revolt of the American colonies was defined. Its essence was an attempt to unite the Empire by trade bonds. The experiment was tried for a century, and failed.

3. Foreign Politics and Domestic Discords (1660–1678)

Clarendon's Policy. — During the first seven years of Charles II's reign the conduct of affairs was mainly left in the hands of Clarendon. But his position was never secure. He was not sufficiently anti-Puritan for the Cavalier Parliament, who never forgave him for his leniency in the matter of lands ; while he was much too austere to enjoy the confidence of the frivolous king. Clarendon admired the foreign policy of Cromwell, and held that the future of England lay across the seas. He wisely sold Cromwell's conquest of Dunkirk to France—an act for which he was bitterly attacked.

The Portuguese Alliance.—The marriage of Charles II to a Portuguese princess was another sign of the continuance of a policy friendly to France ; for France had helped to win the independence of Portugal (1640), and, being now at peace with Spain, wanted to win for her protégé a useful alliance. This was, for England, the beginning of an alliance which has been unbroken from that day to this : it counted for a great deal in the eighteenth century ; it took British troops into Portugal in the Peninsular War, and brought Portuguese troops into the British sector during the Great War. In the meanwhile it gave to England the island of Bombay in India, and the fortress of *Tangier* on the African coast—a post which, until 1683 (when it was lost), played the part later played by Gibraltar of giving England a secure base at the entrance to the Mediterranean.

* School Atlas, Plate 56*c*.

Parliament and the Dutch War.—The Dutch War of 1665–1667 was the outcome of Clarendon's interest in colonial questions. But this war also showed the independence of Parliament. Parliament attached to its money-grants for this war an "appropriation-clause," to make sure that the money was rightly spent; and this became a regular practice. The Cavalier Parliament was by no means "subservient." Already there was growing up in it an opposition, which took the name of the "Country Party": the rudiments of a party system were appearing.

Plague and Fire.—The Dutch War had just begun when the Great Plague broke out: it ravaged the whole country, and decimated the crowded alleys of London (1665). In the next year a terrible fire destroyed the greater part of London (1666). It burnt out the germs of the Plague, and gave to the rising architect Christopher Wren not only the chance of rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral and a multitude of other churches, but of suggesting a new city plan for London, which that generation had not sufficient imagination to carry out.

Impeachment of Clarendon.—These disasters were necessarily a grave handicap to government, coming in the midst of a great war. Parliament made no allowance for this. When the Dutch fleet appeared in the Medway, it impeached Clarendon as Charles I's Parliament had impeached Buckingham. Charles II had not the courage to defend his loyal minister by dissolving Parliament. Glad to be rid of his austere mentor, he advised Clarendon to go abroad; and the old statesman died in the exile which he had for so many years shared with his ungrateful master. The readiness of a Royalist Parliament to use the weapon of impeachment against a Royalist minister was ominous.

The Cabal.—After Clarendon's fall Charles II took no chief minister, but tried to work with a group of his intimates—men who were emancipated from the scruples of Clarendon, and who did not share the rigid Anglican views of Parliament. The Privy Council was now too big to be an effective working body as it had been in Elizabeth's time; and there was a tendency for an informal group of ministers to grow up—the ancestor of the modern Cabinet. Men called these secret groups "Cabals"; and by a curious coincidence, the initials of the five men whom Charles most consulted spelt the word Cabal—Clifford, Arlington, Buckingham, Ashley (later Lord Shaftesbury), and Lauderdale. Two of these—Clifford and

Arlington—were Catholics. Buckingham (a brilliant, versatile creature "who in the course of one revolving moon was chemist, statesman, fiddler, and buffoon") and Shaftesbury (an old Cromwellian) were friendly to the English Dissenters; Lauderdale, an ex-Presbyterian, chiefly interested in Scottish affairs, was now trying the effects of toleration in Scotland. All were anxious, for various reasons, to introduce religious toleration, which they knew they would never get from Parliament; and so long as the king was in financial straits, he must do as Parliament desired.

The Triple Alliance.—The Dutch had made peace in 1667 largely because they were alarmed by a sudden aggressiveness on the part of France. Louis XIV had claimed the Spanish Netherlands in right of his Spanish wife, when her father died in 1665; and he had proceeded to make good his preposterous claim by the sword. This was the first sign of the menace of French power, which was later to become so formidable. It especially alarmed the Dutch, because the Spanish Netherlands were their defence against France. They therefore strove to build up an alliance against France; and in 1668 succeeded in persuading England and Sweden to join the *Triple Alliance*. The mere formation of this alliance was enough to stop the French advance; and the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the first of Louis' aggressive adventures. Thanks mainly to Sir William Temple, the English ambassador at The Hague, England had played her natural part in helping to check a menace to the peace of Europe.

The Secret Treaties of Dover.—But Louis XIV would not accept this check. He resolved to ruin the Dutch. The first step was to isolate them, and for this purpose he could make use of Charles II's need of money. Secret negotiations were opened (through a brilliant lady who became Charles II's mistress and Duchess of Portsmouth), and Charles was offered a subsidy of £200,000 a year, which would relieve him from his humiliating dependence upon Parliament, on condition that he would join in an attack on the Dutch and re-establish Catholicism in England; he was also promised, for the latter purpose, the use of an army of 6,000 men. This project could not, however, be submitted to the Protestant members of the Cabal, whose support was essential; so a second draft treaty, also secret, was prepared for them. It provided that the Dutch dominions were to be partitioned and that toleration was to be granted to all. Shaftesbury, who believed in

toleration, and as a colonial enthusiast was ready to join in plundering the Dutch, was prepared to accept these terms. Without French money, to make Parliament unnecessary, he knew that toleration was impossible. So the *Secret Treaties of Dover*—the real one and the sham one—were signed in 1670.

Declaration of Indulgence.—In 1672 three events followed from this project. In January (despite strong protests from Shaftesbury) Charles announced a *Stop of the Exchequer*, whereby he suspended repayment of the loans he owed to the London bankers, though he still paid interest. This dislocated trade, caused many bankruptcies, and drove the whole trading interest into opposition to the king. Next a *Declaration of Indulgence* was issued, whereby full toleration was offered to all religions in virtue of the power which the king claimed to " suspend " any law or " dispense " any individual from its operations.

The Third Dutch War.—Finally war was declared against the Dutch, who were attacked by English fleets at sea, while huge French armies poured over their country by land.* If the war had been quickly successful, the plunder of the Dutch would have removed all difficulties. But the Dutch, though taken by surprise, rose heroically to the challenge. Led by Charles II's own nephew, William of Orange, who now entered upon his lifelong duel with Louis XIV, they opened their dykes, and at the cost of sacrificing the lands which their toil had won from the sea, flooded out the French. Ere long they found allies in Europe whose aid saved the Republic from extinction. Meanwhile, at sea, they fought so well that the English fleet, even with French aid, could not overcome them. The result was that, within a year, Charles' exchequer was again empty, in spite of the French subsidies ; and as he could not borrow after the Stop of the Exchequer, there was nothing for it but to summon Parliament (1673).

Parliamentary Crisis.—A real constitutional crisis had arisen. Public sympathy was all on the side of the Dutch, and William of Orange became a popular hero. There were deep suspicions that Charles was the tool of a Catholic conspiracy, led by France. The Declaration of Indulgence implied a dangerous claim of superiority to the laws. Even the Dissenters, though some of them took advantage of the Declaration, denounced it as a device of Rome. Shaftesbury,

* School Atlas, Plate 22*a*.

learning how he had been tricked, went into vehement opposition, vowing vengeance against the king. There was even a *rapprochement* between Churchmen and Dissenters, and a Bill for the relief of the Dissenters passed the House of Commons, though the bishops threw it out in the House of Lords.

The Test Act.—Charles saw that resistance was impossible. He gave way all round. He withdrew the Declaration. He accepted a *Test Act* (1673), which was designed to exclude Roman Catholics from office by requiring all officials to take the Anglican sacrament and repudiate the doctrine of Transubstantiation. When both Clifford and the king's brother, James Duke of York, retired rather than take the test, the belief that there had been a Roman Catholic conspiracy was intensified. The heir to the throne was now a declared Catholic. And when, in the midst of the excitement, James actually took a Catholic princess, Mary of Modena, as his second wife, the alarm was increased. His children by his first wife, Clarendon's daughter, were both girls—Mary and Anne. If by his new marriage he had a son, England would be faced by a Catholic succession. This prospect undermined the loyalty of the Anglicans in Parliament, in spite of all their talk about Divine Right. Charles saw the danger ; and to bring about a reconciliation, he took as his chief minister a sound Cavalier churchman, who could command the confidence of the House of Commons—Sir Thomas Osborne, Earl of Danby. Danby's appointment may be described as the first occasion on which the crown was forced to accept a minister drawn from the preponderant party in Parliament.

Government of Danby.—Danby held office for five difficult years, 1673–1678. His task was to restore the confidence of the Cavalier Parliament in the monarchy by pursuing a definitely Protestant policy. In 1674 he made peace with the Dutch, and withdrew from the now intensely unpopular war. And in 1677 he arranged a marriage between the Duke of York's elder daughter, Mary, and William of Orange,* the hero of the resistance to Louis XIV. William came to be married in England, where twelve years later he was to be crowned king. But he cared little about the English throne in comparison with the resistance to France. He wanted England to join in the war on the Dutch side, and Danby would have liked this ; but the king would not have it. Charles

* See Genealogical Table C, at the end of the volume.

wanted French subsidies for his pleasures, and in 1675 he had signed a secret treaty of neutrality. Danby had refused to countersign this treaty. Early in 1678, however, the king made him send a letter to Louis asking for a large grant. Danby protested, and only consented when the king added a note to say that the letter was written by his orders. Louis XIV, however, knew well enough that Danby was his enemy. It was, in fact, partly the fear of English intervention against him that led Louis to interrupt his conquests in 1678, and to accept the Treaty of Nimwegen. This was a bitter pill, for which he blamed Danby.

Organisation of Parties.—During these five years Danby's main work was to build up again the broken Royalist party. He was the first party organiser, and he spent money freely on the work. The party which he formed was that which was later called "Tory." Its motto was "Church and King"; but in this motto the word "Church" comes first. Meanwhile the able, venomous Shaftesbury was as busily at work forming a rival party, primarily a party of opposition to the crown and to the Catholic succession. Already the English Parliament was beginning to be divided into two rival parties when, in 1678, there suddenly broke out a new revolutionary storm which nearly brought about another civil war, and which ended in the Revolution of 1688.

CHAPTER XXIV

PARTY STRIFE AND REVOLUTION (1678–1688)

1. The Popish Plot and the Exclusion Bill: Whigs and Tories

In 1678 there began a period of fierce political and religious strife,* which is of critical importance for two reasons—first because it brought into being the two organised political parties whose conflicts have filled the modern history of Britain; and secondly because it led up to the peaceful but decisive Revolution of 1688, which put an end to "Divine Right" monarchy.

* Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, the most pungent political satire in the language, deals with these events.

Shaftesbury.—The fomenter of this strife was Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury, a man of immense ability who in happier circumstances might have been a great and successful statesman. He was a rationalist in politics and religion, a close friend of the rationalist philosopher, John Locke. He had no patience with the stupidity of religious persecution, and the "Divine Right of Kings" seemed to him a foolish superstition. He knew that the parsons who had been preaching Divine Right and the duty of Passive Obedience ever since the Restoration, and the squires who had been backing them, did not really believe this creed, though they thought they did. What they really believed was that Passive Obedience was the duty of those who differed from them, and that the king's Right was Divine if he agreed with them. Shaftesbury had been a Republican under the Commonwealth, and Republicanism seemed to him a sensible political creed. He had worked with Charles II against the Cavalier Parliament because this seemed the only way of obtaining toleration and doing other rational things. He had been tricked into supporting a contemptible plot to make England the vassal of France in order to restore Roman Catholicism. He never forgave the king, or put his trust in the monarchy again. Now the right line of advance seemed to him to be the reduction of the monarchy to impotence, since it could not be abolished. And the popular fear of Rome, and the fact that the Duke of York was a declared Catholic, seemed to offer him the means of achieving his ends. A shackled monarchy and religious freedom: this was, in six words, Shaftesbury's aim. It was shared by a good many important people, especially among the greater nobles, who felt no awed veneration for the king; but they could not state it openly, in the then temper of the nation. A powerful monarchy in close alliance with the dominant Anglican party was the rival policy of Danby. This was the creed of the greater part of the nation; but it was only practicable if the alliance of Church and King stood firm. Hence it was essential to damp down or conceal the Catholic leanings of the king and his heir. Danby had succeeded in doing this. Shaftesbury's aim was to bring them out in high relief.

Impeachment of Danby.—Louis XIV, whose ambitious plans of continental conquest had been spoilt by his inability to rely on England, knew that Danby was his enemy, favouring a Dutch alliance. To get rid of Danby, he disclosed to the English opposition the request for a subsidy, which Danby had signed under protest.

This gave Shaftesbury an opportunity to get rid of the sanest and ablest servant of the monarchy. Danby was impeached before the House of Lords. He defended himself by saying that he had only signed the letter by the king's express command. It was replied that this did not exonerate him: he was responsible. But if a minister is responsible for the king's orders, and if it is his duty in certain circumstances to disobey the king, what becomes of Divine Right? Charles was only able to save Danby by dissolving Parliament (January 1679), thus bringing to a close, in anger, the Long Parliament of the Restoration which had begun with such a fervour of loyalty.

The Popish Plot.—Danby fell because it was believed that there had been a revival of the secret plan of the Treaty of Dover, to restore Catholicism by French arms. Before his trial, this suspicion had been deepened by the appearance of an infamous and depraved scoundrel, Titus Oates, with a circumstantial story about a popish plot to murder the king and put the Catholic Duke of York in his place. Oates was a disgraced clergyman of the Church of England who had turned Catholic and spent some time at the Jesuit College at Douai. Expelled from Douai for misconduct, he came to England with his fabricated story, to which his association with the Jesuits gave plausibility. He came at a moment when the English people were in a fevered state of suspicion, and all his stories were believed. He swore informations against Catholics, and reaped wealth from his rewards as an informer: his wretched victims were condemned by panic-stricken juries. Other scoundrels—some of them, like Dangerfield, cleverer than Oates—joined in the lucrative trade; and soon panic reigned, and an abominable persecution raged.

Coleman's Letters.—During its course one true revelation, in itself sufficiently alarming, was made. The correspondence of the Duke of York's confidential secretary, Coleman, was seized and published. It contained letters to Louis XIV's Jesuit confessor, in which the prospects of a forcible conversion of England were discussed. "We have a mighty work upon our hands," Coleman wrote, "no less than the conversion of three kingdoms, and by that the subduing of a pestilent heresy. . . . There was never such hope of success since the death of Queen Mary. . . . That which we rely upon most, next to . . . the favour of my master the Duke, is the mighty mind of His Most Christian Majesty" (Louis XIV).

Popular Panic.—The danger was a real one. But it did not arise from murder plots by harmless Catholics. It arose from the prospect of the Duke of York's succession, and the events of his reign showed later how real it was. Even the strongest of Royalists shared the panic : this was why, in its final session, the Cavalier Parliament raged so furiously against the Government. But it was the duty of statesmen to restrain the cruel panic stirred up by the informers, while taking measures to guard against the future peril. Shaftesbury cynically stirred up the panic, hoping to profit by it, and egged on the London mob to terrorise moderate-minded people. Thereby he forfeited his chance of success, and his reputation as a statesman.

The Problem of the Succession.—Shaftesbury's plan was to exclude the Duke of York from the succession by an Act of Parliament. The Royalists, shocked by the idea of interfering with hereditary succession, were willing to go to almost any length in limiting the rights of a Catholic king. But this would not content Shaftesbury. He wanted the succession to be fixed by Parliament, as the surest way of destroying the superstition of Divine Right. But if James was excluded, who should succeed ? The natural heir would be James's eldest daughter Mary, a Protestant, married to the Protestant hero William of Orange, who was himself (as a grandson of Charles I) next in the line of succession after James's daughters. But William was a friend of Danby's, who had arranged his marriage. Shaftesbury feared that he would not be content to be a puppet-king. He therefore put forward as his candidate for the throne the Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of Charles II ; and fantastic stories were set about to the effect that the king had been secretly married to Monmouth's mother.

The Exclusion Bill.—Over this question of Exclusion and the Duke of Monmouth fierce controversy raged for two years : it was, in fact, a duel between Shaftesbury and the monarchy, and at first, owing to the heated state of public opinion, the advantage seemed to lie wholly on the side of Shaftesbury. A new Parliament, elected in March 1679, gave an overwhelming majority to Shaftesbury. It renewed the impeachment of Danby. It also passed a very valuable Act, the *Habeas Corpus Act*, which provided new safeguards for the long-established right of all Englishmen to be promptly brought to trial on a definite charge when imprisoned by authority : this was meant as a safeguard against arbitrary power. Finally, it introduced and carried an *Exclusion Bill*. After three

months, Charles dissolved this dangerous House, and fresh elections were held.

Whigs and Tories.—But it was obvious that the new House would be even worse than the last, and Charles put off its meeting from month to month. Thereupon a rain of petitions and addresses began; petitions from those who believed in the Exclusion Bill, demanding an immediate meeting of Parliament; addresses from staunch Royalists expressing abhorrence of this interference with the royal prerogative. The nation was divided into two parties, of Petitioners and Abhorrers. Presently they began to bandy other nicknames. The Petitioners called their opponents *Tories*, after the Roman Catholic outlaws of Ireland. The Abhorrers fixed upon their enemies the name of *Whigs*, after the embittered Covenanters who were at this very moment in rebellion in Scotland. The nicknames stuck, and presently became names of pride; thus the two English political parties drew their names respectively from Ireland and Scotland.

Rejection of the Exclusion Bill.—After delaying the meeting of Parliament until he could feel that the frenzy was beginning to abate, Charles summoned it in October 1680. Amid stormy scenes, the House of Commons passed the Exclusion Bill. But the Lords rejected it, influenced mainly by the eloquence of Lord Halifax, who called himself a "Trimmer," and begged them to beware of plunging the nation into civil war. This was, indeed, a real danger; and all over the country reasonable men were fearing that 1641 had come again, and that if unrestrained passions were allowed to reign the nation might easily be plunged into the still unforgotten miseries of war. Moreover, men were beginning to be ashamed of the ugliness of the Popish Plot, and the cruelties that had been inflicted in its name. When, in December 1680, an aged and inoffensive Catholic peer, Lord Stafford, was executed, the turn of the tide came suddenly.

The Reaction.—Charles had been patiently waiting for this. He knew that his enemy, Shaftesbury, had ruined his own cause by his violence. Charles had dissolved the Parliament of 1680 after the rejection of the Exclusion Bill. In 1681 he summoned a fresh Parliament at Oxford, the centre of extreme Royalism. The Whigs came to this meeting with bands of armed followers, and civil war seemed almost inevitable. But the Tories were now holding up their heads again. The reaction had manifestly come; and after a

brief, stormy session, Charles once more dissolved. His shrewd patience had been rewarded. The Exclusion Bill had been killed by the violence of its supporters and by the bitter memories of civil war which they had revived. For the rest of his reign he was untroubled, and wielded a more absolute authority than he had yet enjoyed. The Whigs had shot their bolt, and had rather strengthened than weakened the power against which they strove. Violence nearly always defeats its own ends.

Persecution in Scotland.—Meanwhile Scotland had been suffering from still more intense troubles. Having found that he could not kill the Covenanters' conventicles with kindness, Lauderdale let loose upon them the most ferocious persecution that had yet been seen in Britain. Atrocious penalties were imposed on those who attended conventicles, culminating in death for preaching in the open air. An army of 10,000 men, including 6,000 half-savage Highlanders, was let loose upon the Whig districts : nobody was safe from them without a licence.*

The Revolt of the Covenanters.—This ferocity led to the violence of despair. In 1679 Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrews, a recreant Covenanter who was now Lauderdale's right-hand man, was murdered by a band of fanatics at Magus Muir, near St. Andrews. The murderers took refuge in the oppressed West country, and the Covenanters prepared to rise. A large conventicle, attacked by a body of troops under the gallant but cruel persecutor, Graham of Claverhouse, beat them off with loss at *Drumclog* (1679), and this was the signal for a rising. But the pitiful array of desperate peasants could not hold out against regular troops ; and at *Bothwell Bridge* (1679) they were scattered with heavy slaughter by an army under the Duke of Monmouth.

The "Killing Time."—Now began a terrible persecution, which is known in the annals of Scotland as "the Killing Time." The Covenanters were hunted like wild beasts among the moorlands ; they were shot without trial on their own doorsteps ; they were rounded up in droves and sent to Edinburgh to "glorify God in the Grassmarket"—the execution-place of the Scottish capital ; they were subjected pitilessly to the tortures of the boot and the thumbscrew. This horror went on from 1679 until it was ended by the Revolution in 1688 ; and these ten years left a deep mark upon the

* Scott's *Old Mortality* deals with this period.

mind of Scotland, only comparable with the far less cruel Marian persecution in England. The direction of this ugly work was given to James Duke of York, who was in these years safer out of England ; and the gusto with which he carried out his hideous task was a bad omen for the future.

2 The Royalist Reaction (1681–1685)

Vengeance on the Whigs.—After 1681 Charles II held no more parliaments—flouting the Triennial Act, under which a meeting should have been held in 1684 at latest. There were no serious complaints. Parliament had been discredited by its own violence. Charles was free to pursue his vengeance against the Whigs. They had thought for a moment of resistance, but realised that it was hopeless. The leaders, including Shaftesbury and Monmouth, fled to Holland, where they received a chilly welcome from William of Orange ; and in Holland they were busy plotting during the next few years. At home a knot of extremists, led by Colonel Rumbold, an old Cromwellian soldier, formed a foolish plot (the *Rye-house Plot*, 1683) to seize the king and the Duke of York on their way from Newmarket to London. The organisers of the plot were executed ; and the occasion was seized to wreak vengeance upon leading Whigs who were still in England, though it is certain that they had nothing to do with the plot. Lord Russell, the upright and honourable son of the Earl of Bedford, and Algernon Sidney, a strict Republican aristocrat who had been a member of the Rump, were sent to the scaffold. They became the martyrs of the Whig party.

Revision of Charters.—Charles next set himself to prepare a submissive Parliament by calling in the charters of a large number of boroughs, and revising them in such a way as to ensure that the boroughs would return amenable members. This was an unprecedented exercise of the royal prerogative ; yet it was accepted with scarcely any protest. The same method was applied in another and more important sphere. There had been complaints from the colonies that the governors were not always to be trusted—especially in the New England colonies in which they were popularly elected ; and that they were failing to enforce the restrictions imposed by the Navigation Acts. The charters of Massachusetts and the other New England colonies, and the charter of New Jersey, were therefore called in. Even the New England colonies submitted with extra-

ordinary docility. Charles II died before he had an opportunity of showing what changes he proposed to make in the colonial system. Indeed, the new charters had not even been granted before the Revolution. But it is some indication of what was intended that James II appointed a single governor to control all the colonies from Delaware to Maine. Evidently it was intended to establish a highly centralised system. But before the character of this system had been made clear, the Revolution put a stop to all these projects.

Passive Obedience.—Throughout these years of reaction, the doctrines of Divine Right and Passive Obedience were preached with a fervour greater than ever. The glimpse which had been given, in 1679–1681, of the possibilities of a return to civil war, had for the time being tamed those tendencies to independence which even the Restoration Parliament had often shown. Charles II knew that his restored authority rested upon the blind devotion of the Anglican Church ; he was careful to employ ministers who were acceptable to the High Church party, notably the sons of the old Chancellor, Clarendon, who were more whole-heartedly High Church and absolutist than their father had ever been. He knew, also, that as yet it was not safe to attempt unparliamentary taxation ; and he still drew, till the day of his death, his pension from Louis XIV for the service of keeping England out of European politics.

The Insolent Power of Louis XIV.—These years of reaction in England were, in fact, the years of Louis' most unbridled excesses of power. He was setting up tribunals to award to him, under a pretence of law, large territories in Alsace, notably the great city of Strassburg, which he seized in 1681. The other Powers of Europe watched these actions anxiously, but with England neutral or hostile they could not check them. In 1683 even Charles II thought of throwing off the French alliance ; and his brother, the Duke of York, who was more sensitive, disliked the feeling of dependence upon France. In the year of Charles II's death, Louis XIV gave another evidence of his irresistible power. He revoked the *Edict of Nantes*, under which the French Protestants had enjoyed protection for nearly a century. The refugees poured into England by thousands, bringing with them many of the industrial arts in which France had hitherto excelled. But the spectacle of their sufferings sharpened once again the English dread of Rome. On the other hand, the Revocation gave to the obstinate, fanatical James II a grim example which he might be tempted to imitate.

3. The Reign of James II: the Fullness of Power (1685–1686)

Strength of James's Position.—The ease and quietness with which James II succeeded to the throne on his brother's death in February 1685—only five years from the time when his exclusion from the throne had seemed inevitable—showed how violently the pendulum had swung towards reaction. And when his first Parliament met—elected under Charles' revised charters—it displayed the most enthusiastic loyalty. It condemned the informers of the Popish Plot to vindictive punishments—Oates received 3,400 lashes in public in three days. It voted to the king, for life, a revenue of £1,900,000 per annum, which was more than Charles had drawn from his annual grants and his French subsidies put together. The Scottish Parliament and the Irish Parliament were equally loyal. James seemed to be in a stronger position than any of his predecessors since 1603.

Whig Plans of Rebellion.—Across the North Sea, the exiled Whigs had been hoping that the accession of the Catholic king would awaken resistance. They had not measured the strength of the reaction. Some of them believed that a stimulus from outside was all that was needed to cause a great revolt. In June 1685, the Earl of Argyle, the exiled leader of the Scottish Presbyterians, set forth to rouse his clansmen in the Highlands, and the oppressed Covenanters in Ayrshire; while in the same month the Duke of Monmouth landed with a handful of followers at Lyme Regis in Dorset, hoping to raise the West of England.

Monmouth's Rising and the Bloody Assize.—Both expeditions were total failures. Argyle was easily crushed, and executed; and the only result of his adventure was to intensify (if that were possible) the ferocity of the persecution of the Covenanters. Monmouth's standard was joined by large numbers of peasants and miners, and in the towns of Taunton and Bridgewater he was welcomed as a hero. But the gentry did not join him; Bath and Bristol refused to receive him; and in the beginning of July he was caught by the army sent to deal with him, at *Sedgemoor*, near Bridgewater. In this, the last battle fought on English soil, the peasants fought manfully, but they were of course heavily defeated; and there was a pitiless slaughter after the battle. Monmouth was captured and sent up to London, where he was beheaded. Then Judge Jefferies

was sent down to teach a lesson to the rebels. In what was known as the Bloody Assize he condemned three hundred wretches to death, and their gibbeted bodies hung in rows by the roadsides. Eight hundred more were sentenced to transportation. Many of them were granted to courtiers, who sold them as slaves in the West Indies. For these brave deeds Jefferies received a peerage and the office of Lord Chancellor and keeper of the king's conscience. The weapon of terrorism is a two-edged one. This exhibition of cruelty began the reaction against James II.

4. The Tyranny of James II (1686–1688)

James II and his Aims.—These victories, however, convinced the king that he was irresistible, and could now proceed to carry out the desire of his heart. In some ways James II was a better man than his brother. At least he had sincere beliefs, and the courage to act on them. But he was without insight or foresight, obstinate and implacable, even less capable than his father of honestly facing facts. He completely misunderstood (as Charles II never did) the minds of his Tory supporters : he took at their face value their enthusiastic assertions of his Divine Right, and of the duty of Passive Obedience. He thought he was too strong to be resisted. He was the first English king who commanded the services of a trained, professional army. He had 20,000 soldiers in England. Scotland was cowed, and there was another army there. Ireland also had an army, and he could count upon the devotion of the Irish Catholics in an endeavour to enthrone their religion.

The Organisation of Catholic Ireland.—Parliament, loyal as it was, had refused his request to repeal the Test Act. He dissolved it. He dismissed his High Church Tory ministers, and surrounded himself with sycophants—chief among them the very clever but utterly corrupt Earl of Sunderland, who did not scruple to announce his conversion to Catholicism in order to please the king. In place of the Earl of Clarendon, James gave the lord-lieutenancy of Ireland to the Catholic Earl of Tyrconnell. Tyrconnell's instructions were to attack the Protestant ascendancy. He remodelled the corporations of all the Irish boroughs, so as to ensure a Catholic majority in the Irish Parliament, and weeded out Protestant officers from the Irish army, so as to make it a more effective instrument for the overthrow of Protestantism in England.

The Irish Protestants watched these proceedings with helpless dread, fearing a repetition of 1641.

The Dispensing Power.—Since Parliament would not repeal the Test Act, James resolved to make it inoperative by the use of the power of suspending laws, or dispensing individuals from their provisions, which Charles II had tried to employ when he issued the Declaration of Indulgence of 1672. To obtain a secure legal basis for his acts, a collusive action was brought (by his own coachman) against the Catholic Sir Edward Hales, whom James had appointed colonel of a regiment. The judge decided that Hales' commission was valid, in view of the king's dispensation. Thus supported by the law, James proceeded to staff his army with as many Catholic officers as possible, while additional troops were drafted in from Ireland and Scotland. The whole force of about 40,000 was stationed at Hounslow, to overawe unruly London.

Attack on the Church.—Next he opened a direct attack upon Protestantism and the Church of England. In defiance of the law, a Court of *High Commission* was established, though it had been formally abolished by the Acts of 1641 and 1661 ; and Judge Jefferies was put in charge of it. Its business was to punish all who questioned the king's will. The Deanery of Christ Church, Oxford, was given to a Roman Catholic ; the Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, were ordered to elect a Roman Catholic as their president, and ejected from their fellowships by the High Commission when they refused to obey. The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge was deprived of his office by the same authority for refusing to give a degree to a Benedictine monk. When the Universities were thus attacked, every parsonage in England was wounded to the quick : the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings began to wear a less convincing aspect.

Meanwhile in Scotland the same policy was being pursued with equal vigour. Complete toleration was granted to the Roman Catholics. The Privy Council, and the chief offices of State, were filled with Roman Catholics.

Attempt to Bribe the Dissenters.—At first James seems to have hoped to carry out his will by the mere strength of his own authority. But presently he realised that he needed some foundation of popular support, and the Roman Catholics were too few to give it. The Protestant Dissenters, therefore, must be enlisted. In 1687 he issued a Declaration of Indulgence, despite the declared illegality of the Declaration of 1672. It did not merely grant freedom of

worship. It announced that henceforth no tests would be required for any office. This was a handsome bribe ; and on the assumption that it would be accepted, James began to fill town councils with dissenting members, in view of the election of a new Parliament which was to repeal the penal Acts. But the Dissenters received these boons very coldly. Only a few of them sent addresses of thanks. The majority felt that they were being used as tools to prepare the way for a Catholic revolution.

The Seven Bishops.—In 1688 James issued a second Declaration of Indulgence, and ordered that it should be read in all churches on the first two Sundays in June. This was to make the clergy the instruments of destroying their own power. Archbishop Sancroft, an extreme Tory and advocate of Divine Right, was fain to take counsel on this crisis with some of his brethren. Seven of them drew up a petition, couched in the most respectful terms, begging the king not to force the clergy to break the law. Encouraged by this lead, the majority of the clergy throughout the country refused to read the Declaration. James was furious. He sent the Seven Bishops to the Tower, charged with publishing a seditious libel. The whole nation watched their trial with an intensity of interest which had not been equalled since Charles I was judged in Westminster Hall.

Birth of an Heir.—But before the crisis of the trial was reached, another piece of news shocked the nation. On June 10th a son was born to James's Catholic queen. Until this moment it had seemed possible to endure the frenzies of James, because at his death the Protestant Mary and her hero-husband would come to the throne. The birth of this luckless child destroyed that hope, and opened the grim prospect of a long succession of Catholic kings. Men declined to accept such unpleasant news. They took refuge in the story that the child had been brought into the queen's bed in a warming-pan.

Acquittal of the Seven Bishops.—It was in this atmosphere of strain and excitement that the case of the Seven Bishops was gravely argued, with a wealth of constitutional learning. But the decision rested with a London jury ; and the jury declared the bishops Not Guilty. London and England went wild with delight. Even the Dissenters, whom the bishops had persecuted, rejoiced at their acquittal. Even the king's troops on Hounslow Heath threw up their caps and huzza'd.

Invitation to William of Orange.—That night seven leading men signed a letter in cipher, begging William of Orange to come

over and save England from ruin. One of them was Compton, Bishop of London—representative of the Church. Another was the Earl of Danby, who had striven so hard to build up the Tory party. Another was the Earl of Devonshire, spokesman of the more moderate and responsible Whigs. The letter was taken oversea by Admiral Herbert, disguised as a common sailor.

The Situation in 1688.—This momentous message reached William at a critical moment (July 1688). Since 1686 the alliance (known as the League of Augsburg) which he had built up had been awaiting the beginning of a new and more desperate war with Louis XIV. Louis' troops were embodied, and were watching Holland. It would have been impossible for William to leave Holland, still less to take an army with him, if Louis had attacked. Louis warned James II of the danger, and offered his protection. In his besotted pride, James replied that he had no need of protection ; whereupon Louis, feeling that his ally would be none the worse for a lesson, and calculating that if William of Orange did land in England, he would be locked up there and given plenty to do by James's well-organised army, turned his own forces towards Germany, and more or less deliberately let William sail unimpeded. It was in September that Louis began his campaign in Germany. On November 5th William of Orange landed at Torbay in Devonshire.

A Risky Expedition.—He had come because it was of desperate importance for Europe that England should be on the right side in the war which was just beginning. But his landing was a very daring venture. He had only the nucleus of an army, and it was an army of foreigners, always unpopular in England. At first recruits were slow to join him. James had an army of 40,000 men, which was promptly put in motion against him. On every paper calculation William ought to have been defeated ; and if that had happened, Louis XIV's war would have been won in England. Yet within six weeks, without a single battle, the victory had been won, and James had lost his crown.

Collapse of James II's Power.—For while William waited for recruits in the West, Danby had raised Yorkshire, and Devonshire had raised Notts and Derbyshire. And as James advanced westwards to meet his challenger, the army to which he had trusted melted in his hands, deserting, first by units, then by companies and regiments, to join the invader. Even his own daughter Anne, and the most brilliant and trusted of his young officers, John Churchill,

slipped away. In a panic James returned to London. As William's army, growing every day, drew near to London, James resolved to flee; and by doing so solved one of the most difficult problems of his opponent—the problem of what to do with him. He was intercepted, indeed, at Faversham. But no one wanted to keep him; and, lacking even the courage to remain and make what difficulties he could for his foes, James escaped from England, never to return, on December 23rd, 1688.

On his first flight he had thrown into the Thames the Great Seal of England, in the hope of inconveniencing his successors. What he had really thrown away was the emblem of Divine Right monarchy. He had thrown it away by his own deliberate folly. It was sunk for ever beneath the waters, and mired by the memory of his frantic tyranny.

Problems Unsolved.—The flight of James II settled the fate of Divine Right Monarchy; but it did not determine the character of the British constitution. It had still to be discovered whether efficient government could be reconciled with parliamentary supremacy. No country in the world had yet achieved this reconciliation; England had already twice failed in the attempt. That problem James II left behind him, and there was to be much anxious and fearful discussion, and very timid action, ere a solution was found. Moreover, the solution had to be sought in very difficult circumstances. The islands were divided, and they were threatened by the greatest power in the world. They had to fight for their unity, which was less than a century old; they had to fight for their freedom, and for the freedom of Europe; their own leaders were anything but confident; and it was in these critical circumstances that the new principles of government had to be decided and brought into operation. The period of twenty-five years in which all these great issues were debated was so important for the future of the British peoples that it must be separately studied in the next Book.

Supplementary Reading on Book IV

Book IV and the first half of Book V of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* (Vol. I, pp. 357–559) deal, much more fully, with this period, especially with foreign affairs. Green's *Short History* is good on the Puritans (pp. 460–672), and Trevelyan's *History of England* (pp. 375–

476) has many useful lights, though lacking in detail. For more advanced study, Trevelyan, *England under the Stuarts*. Among shorter books, Gardiner's *Puritan Revolution* and Airy's *Restoration and Louis XIV* (Epochs of Modern History) will be found useful, especially the former; Gardiner was the supreme authority on the period. Maitland's *English Constitutional History* (Period IV, pp. 281–389) deals with the great constitutional issues of the period. Book V of the *Piers Plowman Histories* (by E. H. Spalding) is useful for social and economic history. Firth's *Cromwell's Army* is a very interesting account of the military methods of the period. Beer's *Origins of the British Colonial System* is a good modern book on that subject. There is splendid reading in Parkman's *Pioneers of France in the New World*. *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, by his Wife (Bohn's Library), is a very charming picture of a Puritan gentleman. Lord Acton has a good lecture on "The Rise of the Whigs" in his *Lectures on Modern History*. Gooch's *Political Thought from Bacon to Halifax* (Home University Library) is useful for the development of political ideas. Macaulay's *History of England* covers the reign of James II in vivid detail, and his famous Second Chapter, on the condition of England in the time of Charles II, is very readable.

BOOK V

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT

(1688–1714)

FIG. 23.—The Struggle against Louis XIV.

BOOK V

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT (1688–1714)

The quarter of a century which followed the flight of James II was a period of great significance in British history. In one aspect it was the completion of the preceding period, because it saw the conclusion of the long struggle between Crown and Parliament which filled the seventeenth century, and the definition of the methods of government by a landowning oligarchy wielding control through Parliament which lasted until the nineteenth century. In another aspect it was the beginning of the next period, because it saw the opening of the long duel with France for commercial and colonial supremacy which came to an end in 1815.

The best way of regarding these twenty-five years is to think of them as occupied with a struggle for the establishment and defence of constitutional government and parliamentary supremacy. The process of constitutional definition was not completed in 1689. It lasted throughout the period; it covered the Scottish Union of 1707 and the establishment of the cruel penal code in Ireland; and it reached its culmination in the defeat of the attempt to restore the Stewarts on the death of Anne. The struggle with Louis XIV was at first waged mainly for the defence of the Revolution Settlement, and the long war of William III has sometimes been called "the War of the English Succession"; while the later stage of this conflict may fairly be described as a battle for supremacy, in the European field, between two conceptions of government—absolutism, represented by Louis XIV, and constitutionalism, represented by the English and the Dutch. This struggle was to be extended to the non-European world in the following period.

CHAPTER XXV

THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT AND THE FIGHT FOR ITS DEFENCE (1689–1692)

1. The Settlement in England

The Situation in 1688.—The bloodless victory over James II was not decisive. Many difficulties had yet to be solved, not only in England, but in Scotland and Ireland. And across the Channel Louis XIV, exasperated by the unexpected turn of events, was watching for an opportunity to restore the situation. He not only commanded immense military resources : at this moment his fleet, built up by Colbert during the previous quarter of a century, was so strong as to give him, for a time, command of the Channel. It was therefore urgently important that the new Government should be firmly established in every part of the islands as rapidly as possible.

The Convention. — Immediately after occupying London, William of Orange called together an irregular assemblage, known as the *Convention*, to give the cover of popular support to his actions. There was no time for an election ; so the Convention consisted of the peers, together with all who had sat in the parliaments of Charles II, and the Mayor and Aldermen of London. This body drew up a *Declaration of Rights*, setting forth all the breaches of the constitution of which James II had been guilty ; and authorised the election of a Parliament, which met in January.

The Problem of the Succession.—Meanwhile the leading men were discussing the problem of what was to be done about the succession to the crown. It was the great virtue of the Revolution of 1688 that it was not a party victory : Tories as well as Whigs had shared in it. But Tories and Whigs still differed sharply about the theory of the monarchy. The Whigs, regarding the king as only the first officer of the State, would have liked Parliament frankly to declare James II deposed, and to choose William as his successor. The Tories hated the idea of disturbing the divinely appointed hereditary succession, and would have liked to salve their consciences by appointing William as " Regent " on behalf of James II : at the most, they wanted to pretend that James had abdicated, to pretend further that his son was a changeling, and to let the throne pass to Mary, as his heir. There might easily have been strife between

these irreconcilable views. But the decisive word lay with William. He made it plain that he would neither accept a Regency, nor be content with the position of Prince Consort. He was making ready to return to Holland, when a compromise was reached which saved the face of the Tories : James was declared to have abdicated by his flight, and William and Mary were invited to occupy the throne jointly. In February they were crowned, and the two months' interregnum came to an end. In reality the Whig view had triumphed. It was Parliament which had fixed the line of succession, and this fact governed the whole settlement.

The Bill of Rights.—The main feature of the Revolution Settlement in England was its extraordinarily conservative character, and the slight and seemingly unimportant changes which it made in the Constitution. *The Bill of Rights* (1689), which repeated the terms of the Convention's " Declaration," is accounted one of the main documents of English constitutional history, ranking with Magna Carta. Yet it was, like Magna Carta, mainly a restatement of long recognised laws and usages, which had been violated by the Crown. It declared illegal the exercise of the " suspending power," the maintenance of an army without parliamentary consent, the creation of a High Commission Court, and the like. But there was nothing new in all this. There was no general statement of principle, no assertion of parliamentary supremacy, no attempt to diminish or define the powers of the Crown.

Financial and Military Control.—Nevertheless parliamentary supremacy was very effectually secured, by two simple devices. (1) Instead of voting a large revenue to the king for life, as had been done in the cases of Charles II and James II, Parliament made the greater part of its grants only annual, thus ensuring that it should be summoned every year, and that its assent should be obtained for the purposes for which the taxes were to be spent ; and it also " appropriated " particular taxes to particular purposes, thus ensuring its control over the main departments of government. (2) Recognising that a standing army was now necessary, especially in view of the great war in which England was now to be involved, it found an easy means of ensuring that the Army also should be under its control. For this purpose it passed a *Mutiny Act*, defining the special obligations of military discipline : apart from this Act, only the ordinary laws of the land would apply to soldiers, and discipline would be destroyed. The Mutiny Act was made annual ; Parliament,

therefore, must meet every year to renew it. These two simple measures made the Crown completely dependent upon Parliament, and unable to carry out any policy which Parliament did not approve. This completed the Revolution Settlement, as it was defined in 1689.

The Triennial Act and Freedom of the Press.—Two enactments, made later by a Whig Parliament, formed a sort of supplement. In 1694 a *Triennial Act* was passed. Its purpose was not (like that of the Act of 1664) to ensure that Parliament should meet at least once every three years, for such a provision was now unnecessary. It provided that no Parliament should last for more than three years, in order to ensure against the existence of any more Long Parliaments, kept in being because they suited the Crown. Finally, in 1695, the Licensing Act was not renewed. It was never revived again. And this meant that complete *liberty of the Press* was established in England. This is one of the most essential elements in a system of free government.

The Toleration Act.—On the religious side the settlement was equally modest and simple. There was some talk of a measure of "comprehension" for the Dissenters. But the High Church clergy were already sufficiently restive and unhappy: the archbishop, four bishops, and four hundred clergy (known as the "Nonjurors") gave up their benefices rather than take the oath of allegiance to the new sovereigns. This ensured the supremacy of the Low Church party, who were allies of the Whigs and not unfriendly to the Dissenters, and the new archbishop, Tillotson, was a strong Low Churchman. It was, however, felt to be dangerous to press the High Church party too hard. So the only religious change made was the passing of a *Toleration Act* (1689), which gave freedom of worship to all who would accept thirty-six of the Thirty-nine Articles. This excluded Roman Catholics, who could not abjure Transubstantiation, and Unitarians, who could not accept the doctrine of the Trinity. The laws were not enforced, however, even against these, except at moments when Jacobite plots made the Roman Catholics appear politically dangerous. The Toleration Act undid the cruelty of the "Clarendon Code." But it did not repeal the Test Act of 1673, or the Corporation Act, which excluded Dissenters from all public offices. Many Dissenters, however, got over the difficulty by "Occasional Conformity," that is, by taking the Anglican Sacrament for qualifying purposes; and in practice toleration

was genuine in England from 1689 onwards, except for the Roman Catholics.

Such were the extremely modest legal changes whereby parliamentary supremacy and religious liberty were established in England. They had the supreme virtue that they were reached by consent, and enabled the nation to pass through a difficult period without serious division. Nevertheless, the new regime was felt to be insecure. For that reason, there were very few of the leading men of this period—Tories and Whigs alike—who were not guilty of maintaining secret relations with the exiled court, since there was always a danger that the Stewarts would be restored by the might of Louis XIV.

2. The Revolution in Scotland

Collapse of the Stewart System.—In Scotland the change was more complete and unflinching than in England. The flight of James II brought about an immediate collapse of the whole system of tyranny in Church and State which had been built up since 1660. The Roman Catholic ministers fled. While the persecuted peasantry of the south-west " rabbled " the hated curates, an assembly of nobles and gentry invited William to undertake the government, and a Convention was called, which met in March 1689—after William and Mary had been crowned in England. There was a Jacobite element in the Convention, but it was so much outnumbered that many of its members withdrew. A " Claim of Right " was drawn up on the model of the English Declaration, setting forth James's offences ; but without any evasion it went on to declare that he had forfeited the crown, and to offer it to William and Mary. The Episcopate was condemned, and also the practice of appointing " Lords of the Articles " to do the work of Parliament, which had been one of the main foundations of royal power. Thus, for the first time in its history, the Scottish Parliament acquired real freedom of action. Next year (1690) the full Presbyterian system was restored, and the General Assembly met again. The Revolution brought constitutional and religious liberty to Scotland. But this liberty was attended by dangers. Now that, in both England and Scotland, Parliament was supreme, there was a real danger of a divergence of policy between the two countries. A Union of the Crowns was not enough. A Union of Parliaments had to follow, though seventeen years passed before it came.

The Battle of Killiecrankie.—While the Convention was establishing the new system, Graham of Claverhouse (now Viscount Dundee), who had for ten years commanded the royal forces in Scotland, was preparing to strike a blow for the fallen king. He was a gallant and loyal soldier, with some of the qualities of his cousin Montrose. He was able to raise an army in the Highlands, especially among the clans that hated the Campbells, whose chief, the Earl of Argyle, was almost the hereditary head of the Presbyterian party. The Scottish army, under General Mackay, was sent to deal with Dundee, and met him in the Pass of *Killiecrankie.* They were dispersed by one wild onrush of the clansmen, while they were trying to fix their new-fangled bayonets. But Dundee was killed in the fray ; and after his death resistance melted away.

The Massacre of Glencoe.—It took two years more to pacify the Highlands. In 1691 an indemnity was offered to all who would take the oath before the end of the year. One petty chieftain, Macdonald of Glencoe, delayed till after the last moment through motives of pride, but actually took the oath on January 7th, 1692. The Master of Stair, William's most trusted adviser on Scottish affairs, thought that this gave an opportunity of teaching a lesson to the Highlands, and resolved to punish the Glencoe Macdonalds. The task was entrusted to a detachment from Argyle's own regiment, the hereditary enemies of the Macdonalds. Welcomed as guests, in the night of February 1st the soldiers turned on their hosts and massacred them : a profitless and unforgivable crime which has stained William III's memory. It did not turn the other Macdonald clans into friends of the new regime ; they were in the van of every later rising. But for the moment there was no further ground for nervousness in regard to Scotland.

3. The Revolution in Ireland

The Irish Situation in 1688.—It was in Ireland that the crisis of the Revolution had to be fought out. There, during James II's reign, his Lord-Lieutenant, the Earl of Tyrconnell, had already done much to stir up national feeling among the Irish Catholics. As soon as the news arrived that William of Orange had landed in England, Tyrconnell proceeded to arm the Catholics, raising, it was said, as many as 100,000 men ; while he ordered the Protestants to give up their arms. Many Protestants fled the

country. Those of Ulster, deserting their homes, concentrated in Londonderry and Enniskillen, where they prepared to defend themselves; they proclaimed William and Mary as king and queen and sent urgent messages to England for aid.

Londonderry and Enniskillen.—In March 1689, James II landed in Ireland, bringing some French troops, French officers to train the Irish, large supplies of arms, and a considerable sum of money—all given by Louis XIV. Londonderry and Enniskillen were at once besieged: they were the last English strongholds in Ireland. The *Siege of Londonderry* lasted from April to July, and the defenders had almost been starved into surrender when English vessels contrived to break the boom which closed the river, and threw provisions into the town. A little later (August) the defenders of Enniskillen sallied out and beat back the opposing forces at *Newtown Butler*. James had thus failed to crush this last resistance while he was still left to himself. In October a small English force landed at Belfast, under the Duke of Schomberg, a French Huguenot exile in the service of William. This force contrived to win back most of Ulster, where the Protestants were numerous. But at the end of 1689 four-fifths of Ireland was still under the control of James, and the Revolution was insecure while this state of things continued.

The Irish Parliament.—Meanwhile an Irish Parliament had met in Dublin. It cancelled the Acts of Settlement of Charles II, and voted the restoration to their original owners of all lands confiscated since 1641. It practically established the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. It repealed Poynings' Acts, and declared the Irish Parliament independent of English control. In other words, Ireland, like Scotland, declared for political and religious independence. James did not welcome these decisions, though he had to accept them; and friction and divided purposes resulting from this weakened the action of the Irish leaders. The Irish Parliament also committed the grave blunder of passing a savage Act of Attainder, whereby it condemned to death as traitors over two thousand peers, landowners, and clergy who had failed to give their allegiance to James II. This made the struggle one of life and death. In any case, it seemed essential for the safety of England and Scotland that Ireland should be reconquered. In 1690 the war in Ireland became the centre of the whole European conflict, and William III himself took command.

The Crisis of 1690.—If Louis XIV had realised the importance of the Irish struggle, and concentrated his strength upon it, the situation would have been grave indeed. For at this moment, having won an important battle at *Fleurus* in the Netherlands, he had the upper hand of the continental allies on land. And, what was far more important, he also had command of the sea. In July 1690, the French fleet, under Tourville, defeated the combined English and Dutch fleets under Lord Torrington, off *Beachy Head.* This was the worst defeat yet recorded—or ever recorded—in British naval annals, and it might have been disastrous. There was a panic in England lest there should be a French invasion : troops for the purpose were mustered at Dunkirk, and the main English military forces had gone to Ireland. Louis missed this opportunity. He did not even attempt to cut the communications between England and Ireland, which he might readily have done ; nor did he send more than a small force to Ireland to take part in the critical struggle. He allowed the Battle of the Boyne, which had been fought just before the Battle of Beachy Head, to be the decisive event in the Irish struggle.

The Battle of the Boyne.—William had landed in Ulster in the spring of 1690, with an army of 35,000 men. Advancing southwards on Dublin, he found his passage barred at the River Boyne by James, with an army of 30,000 men, including 6,000 French. This was a cosmopolitan battle : while there were French troops on the one side, on the other there were, besides Irish Protestants and English troops, also Dutch, German, Swedish, and even Finnish soldiers. The Battle of the Boyne was a turning-point not merely in the history of Ireland, but in the great European conflict. William won a complete victory ; James abandoned Dublin without attempting a defence, and fled to France.

The Treaty of Limerick.—Deserted by their king, the Irish resisted gallantly for another year. In 1691, when it was too late, substantial French forces were sent to stiffen the resistance. A hard campaign had to be fought by English troops under the Dutch General Ginckel, before Munster and Connaught were conquered. The decisive events were the forcing of the line of the Shannon at *Athlone*, and the shattering of the main Franco-Irish army at *Aughrim* (June 1691). Even then, Limerick held out for three months under the gallant Patrick Sarsfield. Its surrender (October 3rd, 1691) marked the final subjugation of Ireland. In surrendering, Sarsfield thought he had at least gained something for his country. The *Treaty of*

Limerick permitted the Irish troops to go abroad and take service there if they wished, and many gallant officers in continental armies made Irish names famous during the eighteenth century. The Treaty also provided that Irish Catholics should enjoy the same degree of freedom as they had enjoyed under Charles II. Alas! the Irish Parliament—now again reflecting the Protestant ascendancy—repudiated this provision (1697), on the ground that Ginckel had exceeded his powers.

Supremacy of the English Parliament.—The Revolution Settlement in Ireland could not begin until the war was over. In 1692 the English Parliament—overriding the rights of the Irish Parliament—passed an Act requiring all officials and all members of Parliament in Ireland to make a declaration against Transubstantiation. This, of course, excluded the Catholics—three-quarters of the population—from all public offices and from Parliament, though not from the right of voting. The Irish Parliament did not challenge this extraordinary assumption of power on the part of the English Parliament, and it was thus established that the English Parliament could legislate over the head of the Irish Parliament—a claim never put forward in the case of Scotland.

The Irish Settlement.—In 1692, 1695, and 1697 the Irish Parliament (now limited to the Protestant minority) passed a series of Acts which regulated Irish affairs for more than a century. In the first place it rescinded all that had been done by its Catholic predecessor in 1689. This brought back Poynings' Acts into effect, which provided that the Irish Parliament could pass no laws which had not previously been approved by the English and Irish Privy Councils; accordingly the English government must share responsibility for all the subsequent legislation. The restoration of Poynings' Acts, together with the power of direct legislation claimed by the English Parliament, turned the Irish Parliament into a controlled and subordinate legislature. Hence there appeared to be no such reason for a Union as there was in the case of Scotland.

The Penal Code.—In 1695 it was enacted under severe penalties that no Catholic might teach in a school or in a private house, and that no child might be sent abroad to be educated as a Catholic: in so far as this law was enforced, the whole Catholic population was sentenced to the ignorance which means barbarism. It was also enacted that no Catholic might possess arms, or a horse worth more than £5. In 1697 all Roman Catholic bishops and

priests were banished ; marriage between Catholics and Protestants was forbidden, and it was provided that if a Protestant heiress married a Catholic her inheritance should pass to the nearest Protestant heir. It was also enacted that all lands belonging to anybody who had taken the side of James II in the recent war should be confiscated : two years later the English Treasury stepped in and sold these lands, taking the proceeds as a contribution to the cost of the war.

Thus were laid the foundations of the iniquitous Penal Code under which Ireland had to live for a century. Further refinements of cruelty were added later. These disgraceful laws form the gravest blot on the records of the British peoples. They caused more than two centuries of conflict, and the poison which they engendered still works in the veins of the British Commonwealth.

4. The Revolution in the Colonies

Parliamentary Supremacy.—In the colonies the Revolution was very quietly accepted. It swept away at once the scheme of centralised government for the northern American colonies which James II had begun to apply. In effect, the post-Revolution government accepted and developed the colonial policy of Charles II. But the establishment of the supremacy of Parliament in England made a very great difference to the position of the colonies. Hitherto their dealings had been almost wholly with the king and the Privy Council ; and, in theory, their own legislative bodies had stood in the same relation to the king as the parliaments of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Now their legislatures, like that of Ireland, were definitely subordinated to the English Parliament.

The Massachusetts Charter.—One important change, however, was due to the Revolution. In 1691 a new Charter was granted to Massachusetts, in place of the one which Charles II had called in. It transferred the appointment of the Governor from the colony to the Crown, merged the old colony of Plymouth with its greater neighbour, established a system of religious toleration in place of the rigid intolerance which had hitherto marked New England, and introduced a moderately democratic franchise in place of the old limitation of civic rights to Church members. Everywhere, save in Ireland, the Revolution brought greater liberty and religious freedom. In Ireland alone it brought cruel oppression and the most crushing form of religious persecution.

The Board of Trade and Plantations.—In 1696 a new public office was instituted to deal with colonial questions—the Board of Trade and Plantations. Its officers conducted the correspondence with the colonial Governors, and endeavoured to maintain a consistent and continuous policy in dealing with them. Although the Revolution brought no material change in English colonial policy, it made that policy more definite and coherent; and this was important in the long series of colonial wars which now began.

CHAPTER XXVI

WILLIAM III AND LOUIS XIV (1688–1702)

1. "King William's War" (1689–1697)

Character of William III. — William III* was always a foreigner in England, as his popular nickname, "Dutch William," indicates. Perhaps it was only his English queen, a lady of great charm and ability, with an understanding affection for her difficult husband, who made the new regime even tolerable in its first years: after her death in 1694 William's difficulties multiplied. He was an ailing, silent, morose man, with no attractive gifts; but he had an indomitable courage in difficulties, and this probably saved the Revolution in England as it had earlier saved the very existence of Holland. He lived for one thing alone—to dispel the nightmare of French domination, and to abase the intolerable pride of Louis XIV. England was for him no more than a means to this end, and he took little interest in her problems save as they helped or hindered his great task. He was never happy except in Holland. He made no English friends: indeed, he had good reason for distrusting Englishmen, for almost every leading man, Whig and Tory alike, was a potential, and often an actual, traitor in secret relations with the exiled king. His friends were Dutchmen who came over with him, and his lavish gifts to them (which founded the fortunes of at least

* There is a short Life of William III by H. D. Traill (Twelve English Statesmen).

two of the English ruling families, the Bentincks and the Keppels) were among the causes of his unpopularity.

Jacobite Plots.—One of the reasons for William's dislike of England was that he was the object of frequent Jacobite plots. The worst of these was a plot formed in 1696 by Sir John Fenwick and other Tories to murder the king: it resembled the Rye-house Plot of 1683 against Charles II. For a time the disclosure of this conspiracy discredited the Tory party, and it was followed by the formation of an Association on the model of that formed for Queen Elizabeth's protection a century earlier. But the inquiries which were carried out in connection with this plot showed that nearly all the leading men in both parties, though they knew nothing of Fenwick's plans, were in secret relations with James II. It is no wonder that William III was unhappy in England, and distrusted the men with whom he had to deal. In truth, there was nothing heroic about the men of the Revolution period. Long years of immorality in high places, of faction-strife, and of pretended enthusiasm about religion which had no roots of genuine belief, had undermined the morale of the politicians.*

The War with Louis XIV.—William had come to England solely in order to swing her weight over to the coalition against Louis XIV; and this aim was achieved when war was declared against France in June 1689. It was his greatest service to England that he brought her into this war; for both by its direct result—the checking of Louis XIV's inordinate ambitions—and by its yet more important indirect consequences, it marked an epoch in British history.

The Fighting in the Netherlands.—The aspect of the war which attracted most attention was the struggle between the rival armies round the fortresses of the Spanish Netherlands (Belgium).† The art of fortification had been brought to so high a pitch of perfection (in relation to the offensive weapons then available) that, unless one side had overwhelming strength or was led by daring genius, deadlock was the normal condition; and, in fact, during nine years of fighting, scarcely any advance was made by either side. William had no such genius for war as Marlborough

* Stanley Weyman's novel, *Shrewsbury*, gives a good idea of the spirit of this time.

† School Atlas, Plate 22*a*.

later displayed. He was defeated in two pitched battles, at *Steenkerke* (1692) and *Landen* (1693), but was skilful enough to avert any evil consequences. In 1695 he achieved one brilliant success, in the capture of *Namur*, the most important victory of the war. In all these battles English regiments played an active part: it was in these Flanders campaigns that the regular British Army, so recently formed, was "blooded"; and Steenkerke, Landen, and Namur are the earliest names inscribed on the standards of the oldest English regiments. But, beyond stopping the conquering career of Louis XIV, all this fighting had no very definite result.

The War at Sea.—Far more significant was the fighting on the sea, in which the English and the Dutch were now standing allies, but the English became more and more the predominant partners. The war had opened with the disaster of Beachy Head, which gave an alarming proof of French naval strength. But Louis XIV, fighting a ring of enemies on land, could not also maintain a supreme navy. In 1692, at *La Hogue*,* his fleet suffered a crushing disaster from the English fleet under Russell. It was to have been used to convoy an army of invasion into England; Russell's victory not only put a stop to that, and killed James II's last hopes, it also securely established English supremacy at sea. There were no more naval battles in this war, and for that reason the importance of the naval war has been overlooked. But the pressure of sea-power is often most effective when it is so great that no battles need to be fought. In reality, the part played by the navy was decisive. It made Britain absolutely safe from attack. It enabled British forces to be moved wherever they were needed. It crippled the enemy: thus when France was attacking Spain in 1694, and sending troops by the sea-route from Toulon, the appearance of an English fleet in the Mediterranean was enough to ruin her enterprise, without any fighting. During these years, English trade suffered very severely from French privateers, while there were very few captures from the French. This was a ground of bitter complaint against the Government, but it was really a proof of naval supremacy. For the reason why there were few captures from the French was that French commerce had been swept from the seas, while the number of British ships was mounting so fast that the lurking French privateer could always find its prey. At the end of

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28.

the war English foreign trade was greater than it had ever been ; French foreign trade had been ruined. This was the result of naval supremacy.

War in the Colonies.—The war extended also to the colonies : it was the first phase of the long rivalry between France and England in America, which ended in 1763.* A French force from Canada invaded the Hudson Valley, and sacked the frontier town of Schenectady (1690). The New Englanders, led by the Governor of Massachusetts, responded in the same year with a vigorous attack on the French colonies. They conquered *Acadia* (Nova Scotia) and seriously threatened Quebec. There was fighting also in the West Indies and in West Africa. In these fields this war was a sort of rehearsal for the fiercer conflicts that were to come. It taught the colonists that they were in danger from the French, and therefore strengthened their loyalty.

The End of the War.—The struggle came to an end in 1697, with the *Treaty of Ryswick*. By this treaty both sides restored their conquests, and Acadia returned to French allegiance, only to be conquered again in the next war. This may seem a lame and impotent conclusion for so much fighting. But it meant that Louis XIV had been definitely checked. His power began to decline ; and the wealth of France had been gravely impaired, both by the expulsion of the Huguenots (many of whom had brought their skill to England, while others had gone to Brandenburg, to Holland, and to the Dutch colony of South Africa), and still more by the setback which the naval war had given to French oversea trade. But perhaps the most important element in the peace was that Louis XIV recognised William III as King of England. "The war of the English Succession" had made the Revolution secure.

2. Party Government : the National Debt

The indirect consequences of the war were even more important than its direct results. It led to, or hastened, very important constitutional and economic changes.

Rise of Party Government.—In the first place, it brought about an approach to the modern system of Cabinet Government. At the opening of his reign William naturally tried to avoid identi-

* School Atlas, Plate 49*a*.

fying himself with either of the political parties, and gave offices to the best men on both sides. But this led to friction and cross-purposes among his ministers, while Parliament, in which there was now a Whig majority, was very distrustful of Tory ministers. This was not merely inconvenient, it might have been disastrous when the nation was at war, because the efficient conduct of war demands unity of purpose. It was by no means easy to carry on government efficiently under the system of parliamentary supremacy. The shrewd Earl of Sunderland, who had been James II's chief minister, suggested to William that the best way out of the difficulty would be to choose all his ministers from one party. They would then be more easily able to work together, and to command the confidence of the House of Commons. The Whigs not only had a majority in Parliament, they were also much more whole-hearted than the Tories about carrying on the war. Accordingly, William gradually gave all the important posts to Whigs; and by 1696 the Whig ascendancy was complete. The group of ministers who held office at that period worked together so intimately that they were known as "The Whig Junto," and there were complaints that government by a secret clique was being revived. In reality the "Junto" of 1696 (whose ablest members were Somers, the Lord Chancellor, and Charles Montague, the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was the first shadowy anticipation of a modern party cabinet. Cabinet government, based on parties, was being forced into existence by the pressure of circumstances.

The Bank of England and the National Debt.—In the second place, the war made great changes in financial methods necessary. It was the first war in which England maintained an army abroad, year after year, besides keeping up a great fleet. It was also the first war in which she found subsidies for her continental allies. But this involved an enormous outlay, far greater than could be met by the proceeds of taxation. It had to be met by borrowing. Governments had long been in the habit of borrowing from year to year, in anticipation of the collection of taxes, and the London bankers had always been ready to accommodate them with loans from the money deposited with them. But these could only be "short-term" loans; they had to be repaid in a few months, otherwise the bankers would be unable to meet their obligations to their depositors. Something different from this was now needed—"long-term" loans, for an indefinite period, forming a permanent "National Debt."

In 1694, on the advice of a Scotsman, William Paterson (who in the next year started the Bank of Scotland), Montague, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, found a means of getting over the difficulty. A group of merchants made a permanent loan to the Government, on condition that they were incorporated as the Bank of England and given the management of future loans of the same kind. The foundation of the Bank of England was an event of the highest political and economic importance. It greatly encouraged the habit of banking, because the security it could offer was greater than that of private banks. It made the raising of government loans easy. And the establishment of the permanent National Debt was also politically important, because those who had lent their money to the Government became strong supporters of the Revolution Settlement, being afraid that a restored Stewart monarchy might repudiate the debt. The "moneyed" and commercial interest, which was growing rapidly stronger, became a very important political factor, able to influence the policy of governments. Its influence was generally thrown on the Whig side.

3. Tory Hostility and the Problem of the Spanish Succession

Tory Reaction.—The conclusion of peace in 1697 ended the first period of William III's reign. Hitherto, while the Revolution was in danger, the Whigs had been most powerful and had had a majority in Parliament, because they had no divided sympathies, and were enthusiastic in their support of the war. But now a reaction towards Toryism began. The Revolution Settlement was safe. The English queen was dead. The "foreignness" of William III, and his lavish generosity to his Dutch friends; the heavy cost of the war, and the burden of the National Debt of £20,000,000; the omnipotence of the Whig "Junto"; the growing power of the "moneyed" interest as against the "landed" interest—all these things aroused the anger of the country gentlemen. The French war had never been popular among the Tories: some of them sympathised with the exiled king, sheltered by France; most of them could not see why England should be dragged by a foreign king into a foreign war, in the interest (as they supposed) of the Dutch. Toryism became the party of Little England and peace. In 1698 there was a Tory majority in the House of Commons. They

attacked the Whig ministers, and reduced the army to 7,000 men.

The Partition Treaties.—William resented this reaction all the more because it came at a very critical moment in foreign politics. Charles II of Spain, the last heir of Philip II in the direct male line, had always been sickly, and his death had been awaited for twenty years. It was now clear that he could not live much longer ; and the question of the succession to the immense Spanish empire, in the old world and the new, was vexing the diplomats of Europe.* The French and the Austrian royal lines had claims to the succession, of practically equal validity ; but neither would allow the other to absorb the whole Spanish empire, nor could Europe contemplate the creation of a power so gigantic without fear. Louis XIV, taught moderation by the strain of the last war, was anxious to avoid the conflict that loomed ahead ; and in 1698 he agreed with William III to recognise the infant prince of Bavaria as heir to the Spanish throne, France and Austria receiving modest compensations in Italy for the abandonment of their claims. In 1699, however, the Bavarian infant died, and the whole question was reopened. With even greater magnanimity Louis consented to recognise the Archduke Charles, second son of the Emperor, as heir to the Spanish crown, France being compensated by Milan and Naples, which would have made her the predominant power in Italy.

Opposition to the Treaties.—These treaties, which were secretly concluded between Louis and William without any consultation with Spain, could only be justified on the ground that they would maintain the peace of Europe. They aroused a natural indignation in Spain. They aroused, also, the anger of the English Tories, because they involved England in incalculable obligations on the Continent. Despite their theories of royal power, the Tories were challenging the king's right to direct foreign policy. The opposition was so vigorous that William had to get rid of his Whig ministers, and appoint Tories, as the only means of keeping the House of Commons in a good humour. This was another step in the direction of party-cabinet government.

A French King in Spain.—And, after all, the Partition Treaties were of no avail. For in 1700 Charles II of Spain died ; and being anxious to preserve the unity of the Spanish empire, made a

* See Genealogical Table G, at the end of the volume.

will just before his death whereby he bequeathed his throne to Louis XIV's grandson, Philip Duke of Anjou, calculating that France was the only power capable of defending the whole inheritance. There was no doubt that the sentiment of the Spanish people endorsed this decision. The temptation thus offered to Louis XIV was too great to be resisted. Here was Spain clamouring to be taken under the wing of France, and all the wealth of the Indies awaiting exploitation. Louis might have hesitated if he had been certain that he would have to meet the united opposition of England and Europe. But in England the Tories were in power; they were attacking William III's policy; they had cut down the army to an almost negligible size. Without the fleet and the subsidies of England other opposition was not to be feared. Louis accepted the splendid prize on behalf of his grandson. At one stroke the results of all the long wars were undone, and the combined Franco-Spanish power seemed to dominate not only Europe but the whole world.

Impeachment of Somers.—With bitterness in his heart, William had to accept the accomplished fact. His Tory ministers and the Tory majority in Parliament took the view that the balance of power in Europe was no concern of England's. They even proceeded (1701) to impeach the Whig leader, Lord Somers, and two of his colleagues, for the part they had played in negotiating the Partition Treaties. In actual fact, William had kept the negotiations in his own hands, holding (like his Tudor and Stewart predecessors) that foreign policy was the king's business. In the case of the first Partition Treaty, he had actually required Somers to send him a blank commission, sealed with the Great Seal, authorising unknown persons to sign an unknown treaty. The impeachment of Somers in 1701, like that of Danby in 1678, implied that ministers were responsible for foreign policy. But it is significant to find the Tories, with their exalted views of royal power, taking the lead in thus restricting the king's authority. The impeachment of Somers came to nothing, because there was a Whig majority in the House of Lords. But thenceforward the responsibility of ministers to Parliament for the conduct of foreign as well as domestic affairs was never again seriously challenged. With sublime inconsistency, it was the Divine Right party which established this principle.

The Act of Settlement.—In 1701 Parliament was called upon to decide upon a very difficult question. The only surviving

son of the Princess Anne had just died ; and it was necessary to make provision against the probable event that both William and Anne would die without heirs. This question was answered by the *Act of Settlement,* 1701, which, though passed by a Tory Parliament, disregarded the claims of James II's son, and the claims of the next heirs, the Dukes of Savoy, who were descended from Charles I's youngest daughter ; and went back to the descendants of James I's daughter Elizabeth.* Even the line of her eldest son was passed over, because they were Catholics ; and the right of succession was conferred upon the aged Sophia, Elizabeth's daughter, who had married the elector of Hanover, and upon her eldest son, afterwards George I. It is important to realise how far afield this Tory Parliament had to go in order to find a Protestant heir ; because this shows how completely they had broken with the idea of divine hereditary right.

Attacks on the Crown.—The Tory authors of the Act of Settlement went out of their way to wound William III. They provided in the Act that the next king was not to involve England in war to protect his foreign dominions without the consent of Parliament, that the king was not to leave England without the consent of Parliament, and that no foreigners (this glanced at William's Dutch friends) were to receive grants or offices or to sit in Parliament. Inspired by personal opposition to a "Whiggish" king, these clauses nevertheless represent an extraordinary departure from divine-right monarchy. The same hostility was shown in other clauses, which provided that no minister or holder of office was to sit in Parliament, and that public affairs were to be transacted in the full Privy Council, and not in cabinet councils of ministers. This was meant as a condemnation of the Whig "Junto." If these anti-Whig clauses had remained law, they would have prevented the development of the system of cabinet government.

Judicial Independence.—One very valuable clause, however, was included in the Act of Settlement, which formed a vitally important appendix to the Revolution system. It provided that the judges were to have fixed salaries, and that they were only to be removed after an address to the Crown by both Houses of Parliament. This clause established the independence of the judicial bench, a vitally important constitutional principle, and one of the essential safeguards of liberty. Henceforward the judges were not to be

* See Genealogical Table C, at the end of the volume.

servants of the Crown, as they had been under the Stewarts—"lions under the throne" Bacon had called them; nor were they to be liable to dismissal because the king disliked their decisions. They were to be the impartial interpreters of laws which were equally binding upon all.

Louis XIV recognises "James III."—Almost at the moment when the Act of Settlement became law, the exiled James II died. Thereupon the magnificent Louis XIV, now, as he thought, securely master of France and Spain, the Netherlands and the Indies, recognised James II's thirteen-year old son, later known as the Old Pretender, as king of England. This was a direct repudiation of the Treaty of Ryswick, and of the Act of Settlement. It suggested that the now redoubled power of France might be employed to conquer England for Catholicism. This bravado brought about a sudden reversal of opinion in England. At the end of 1701 a new Parliament was elected. It was far more Whig in complexion than its predecessor; and even its Tory members were indignant at Louis' action, and ready for war with France.

Death of William III.—Having lived to see English opinion swing round to a sense of the danger of French domination, William III did not survive to take the lead in this last crusade against his life-long adversary. He fell from a horse in March 1702, and his frail constitution was unable to resist the shock. The second, and more intense, phase of the duel with France was left to other leadership. William died unlamented, except by a few friends; yet in face of almost insuperable difficulties he had achieved great things, and had guided England and Europe through a perilous time.

CHAPTER XXVII

QUEEN ANNE: THE DOWNFALL OF LOUIS XIV: WHIGS AND TORIES

1. Marlborough and the War of the Spanish Succession

Queen Anne and the Churchills.—Queen Anne was a placid, stupid, obstinate lady, married to a bovine husband, Prince George of Denmark; she was clearly incapable of directing a great war. But

she had been for twenty years completely under the influence of her brilliant and domineering friend, Sarah Jennings, the devoted wife of John Churchill ; and Churchill,* though few opportunities of displaying his power had yet been given him, was beyond all comparison the ablest man in England, ideally fitted for the difficult work which now lay before him. When Anne dismissed the Whig ministers whom William III had appointed at the end of his reign, and practically put the control of affairs in the hands of the Churchills, she opened the most dazzling period of military glory that England had yet enjoyed. †

John Churchill.—Handsome in person, and with infinite charm of manner, Churchill was always master of himself, and could preserve an Olympian calm in moments of crisis. These qualities made him a wonderful diplomat, able to deal with the touchy and pompous representatives of the heterogeneous States which formed the Grand Alliance : only the highest diplomatic genius could have held them together and directed their activities to a common end. But he had also a genius for war. He was the greatest soldier whom England has ever produced—great not only in tactics, or the management of battles, and in strategy, or the planning of campaigns, but in the still greater power of seeing the war as a whole, and co-ordinating apparently disconnected campaigns on land and sea. He was the first to grasp how sea-power could best be employed in connection with land armies. This superlative genius (like Napoleon later) had no sense of honour, and was governed not by patriotism but by personal ambition. He had betrayed James II and William III in turn ; for this reason William, while recognising his military gifts, had never trusted him. He had no political principles, and, though bred a Tory, despised Whig and Tory alike, and used them for his own purposes : moreover, both parties distrusted him. He was avaricious of money, and used every opportunity that came in his way of adding to his private fortune—taking commissions on all the subsidies paid by England to her allies. He was "the greatest and the meanest of mankind."

Godolphin.—Churchill's most intimate political ally was Lord Godolphin, whose son had married his daughter. As Lord Treasurer,

* There is a Life of Churchill (Marlborough) by C. F. Atkinson (Heroes of the Nations).

† Thackeray's *Esmond* gives a good picture of England and English society in this period of war.

Godolphin was at the head of the English government during eight glorious years, yet he has left a singularly indefinite impression. He had enjoyed long experience of public affairs, and was a very competent man of business: Charles II summed him up as "never in the way, and never out of the way." While Godolphin managed the business of government and finance at home, Churchill (who spent every winter, between campaigns, in London) directed not only the war, but the foreign policy of the country. These partners, engrossed in their single purpose, tried at first to work with Tory colleagues; but finding that the Whigs alone whole-heartedly supported the war, they gradually drifted into association with them, until in 1708 the ministry had become wholly Whig.

The Military Situation.—When the war began,* all the advantages seemed to lie with Louis XIV. He was facing the old combination of England, Holland, and Austria, with some of the minor German States; but now Spain, instead of being against him, was under his control, and he also had the useful alliance of Bavaria in Germany. Relatively to his enemies, he held the central position, and had the great advantage of unity of direction; the allies were not only geographically scattered, but under independent governments. Only the fact that England was the paymistress gave unity to their counsels, and this lever had to be used with tact and caution. One advantage, however, the allies possessed—they had command of the seas. Nobody except Marlborough realised the significance of this fact. Even modern narratives assume that only the land-battles counted; whereas sea-power was the controlling factor, though only one naval battle was fought.

The First Campaigns.—The main object of the war was to drive out the French king of Spain, and to put his Austrian rival on the Spanish throne. But before this could be seriously attempted, the position of the European allies had to be secured.† Austria was endangered on the side of Bavaria and also by a rebellion among her Hungarian subjects. Holland was gravely endangered by the fact that France now controlled the whole of the Spanish Netherlands. During the first two campaigns, 1702 and 1703, the Emperor was

* Macaulay has an essay on the War of the Spanish Succession and on the politics of the period.

† For the situation of the various European powers engaged in the war, see School Atlas, Plate 16. For France and the Spanish Netherlands, see School Atlas, Plate 24.

hard pressed ; the Bavarians were even threatening Vienna. But Churchill, in the Netherlands, made Holland safe by mastering the fortresses of the Meuse and the lower Rhine as far as Bonn. * He concentrated his attention on this part of the field in order to get into touch with the Germans and the emperor. The Dutch, who could not see the war as a whole, would have liked him to throw his strength into the war in western Flanders ; if he had done so, the emperor would have been ruined, and the Grand Alliance would have broken up. Churchill was, in fact, laying the foundations of the great campaign of 1704, which really decided the issue of the war. Meanwhile the British fleet was preparing for the attack on Spain. Though it failed in an attempt to capture Cadiz as a base for an invading army, it captured the Spanish treasure-fleet and destroyed the French squadron that convoyed it (1702) ; and its appearance in southern waters persuaded Portugal to join the allies, thus providing a good base for the invasion of Spain : the *Methuen Treaty* of 1703 with Portugal not only fixed this useful alliance, but in return for facilities for English trade gave an advantage to Portuguese wines over French wines in England, with the result that the English became a port-drinking nation. Meanwhile in Italy the Duke of Savoy had also joined the allies.

Blenheim and Gibraltar. — Thus, by 1704, things were ready for a great series of combined operations. Churchill had no intention of being tied down to a stationary war among the fortresses of the Netherlands, such as William III had fought : he meant to restore the war of movement, and to give the enemy no rest. Hoodwinking the Dutch, who would never have consented to the withdrawal of the army from the Netherlands, he marched swiftly across Germany, made a junction with the main Austrian army, and falling upon the combined French and Bavarian forces under Marshal Tallard, inflicted upon them a shattering blow at *Blenheim* (August 1704), the first great defeat that the armies of Louis XIV had ever suffered. This dazzling victory (in which the enemy had 14,000 casualties and lost 12,000 prisoners) not only saved Austria and reduced Bavaria to impotence, it put France henceforward on the defensive. The prestige of victory was now on the side of the allies, and the initiative always lay with them. Churchill was rewarded with the title of Duke of Marlborough, and with a great estate on

* For the barrier fortresses and Netherlands campaigns, see School Atlas, Plate 22*a*.

which he erected Blenheim Palace. Meanwhile the fleet, under Sir George Rooke, had seized *Gibraltar* (August 1704), and defeated a French fleet that tried to relieve it at *Malaga*. The seizure of Gibraltar gave to the allies a naval base at the entrance to the Mediterranean. It was fiercely attacked during the winter, but it remained securely in English control.

Invasion of Spain.—In 1705 a double attack was made on Spain : * it was, of course, only made possible by sea-power. Under the Earl of Galway, a joint English, Dutch, and Portuguese force advanced from Portugal into Spain ; while on the east coast an Austrian and English force (the latter under the daring and reckless Lord Peterborough †) was landed by a fleet under Sir Cloudesley Shovel on the coast of Catalonia. That province rose in support of the Austrian claimant ; and (always by the aid of the navy) the provinces of Catalonia and Valencia were rapidly won. In the next year, 1706, Galway even succeeded for a moment in occupying Madrid. No hostile army had been seen in Spain since the expulsion of the Moors. These brilliant successes, though they were only temporary, terribly strained the resources of Louis XIV and weakened his prestige. They also demonstrated the formidable nature of sea-power, which made it possible to land unexpected armies at any point on the coast.

Ramillies and Turin.—Meanwhile, Marlborough had been busy in the Netherlands. In 1705 he had broken through the fortified lines, supposed to be impregnable, which the French had prepared from Antwerp to Namur, though the defenders greatly outnumbered the attackers. In 1706 he followed this up by winning, at *Ramillies*, the most brilliant of all his victories, in which he shattered the main French army of the north, inflicting terrible losses. Most of the fortified towns of the Netherlands surrendered. In the same summer, an Austrian army in Italy, under Prince Eugene, won a crushing victory at *Turin*, and drove the French out of Italy.

First Offer of Peace.—Since modern history began, no such series of crushing blows had been endured by any nation as the French had suffered between 1704 and 1706. The pride of Louis XIV

* School Atlas, Plate 26*b*.

† There is a short Life of Peterborough by W. Stebbing (English Men of Action).

was humbled. He asked for peace, offering to let the Archduke Charles have Spain, and to leave to the Dutch a barrier of fortresses in the Netherlands. These terms (1706) ought to have been accepted. The intoxication of victory made the allies refuse them.

A Year of Failures.—In 1707 the tide seemed to have turned. The Austrians were severely defeated in southern Germany. The allies in Spain, attempting a new attack upon Madrid, were disastrously defeated at *Almanza* by the Duke of Berwick (an illegitimate son of James II), and were left with nothing but rebellious Catalonia. And an attempt to take Toulon, backed by the fleet under Sir Cloudesley Shovel, was a complete failure; though the French burnt the best ships of their Mediterranean fleet lest Shovel should seize them, and thus left to the English an unchallenged control of the Mediterranean.

French Resistance Broken.—But the set-backs of 1707 were only temporary. In 1708 a British fleet seized *Minorca*, as a base for operations on the coast of Spain: it remained in British possession for more than seventy years. In the Netherlands Marlborough won a brilliant victory at *Oudenarde*, which broke the French army defending the road to Paris; he also captured the great fortress of *Lille*, and the road to Paris lay open.

Second Offer of Peace.—Once more Louis begged for peace. He was willing that his grandson should give up the whole Spanish empire except Naples and Sicily, and for his own part to cede all the Belgian fortresses to the Dutch, and even to surrender his own earlier conquests of Strassburg and Franche Comté. The allies refused to negotiate, except on the intolerable condition that Louis should send French armies to turn his grandson out of Spain; for they knew that they could not themselves conquer Spain.

Dragging War.—The war went on; but there were no more runaway victories. In 1709, indeed, Marlborough won a fiercely contested battle at *Malplaquet*, but his losses were terribly heavy—heavier than those of the enemy; and this slaughter, coming on the head of the rejected terms of 1708, turned English feeling against the war. The French fought with the courage of despair. During 1710–1711 Marlborough made his way slowly into France; in Spain, though Stanhope again occupied Madrid, he was defeated and forced to surrender at *Brihuega* (1710).

Conquest of Acadia.—During these last years, the war was for the first time extended to the New World, which had hitherto

been left untouched.* In 1710 an English force, with contingents from New England and the co-operation of a fleet, conquered *Acadia* (Nova Scotia) and, in honour of the queen, gave the name of Annapolis to its capital, Port Royal. Next year a more elaborate campaign was planned against Quebec, in the hope of sweeping the French out of Canada ; but it was a failure.

English Politics and the War.—Louis XIV was saved by a change of ministers in England ; the fate of Europe now depended upon the course of English politics. For, thanks to Marlborough's genius, England had suddenly become the greatest power in Europe. Her strength depended, though neither Europe nor, indeed, England herself yet realised this, upon her naval power and the wealth she drew from oversea trade. Her navy had bound the allies together ; her wealth, dispensed in annual subsidies, had enabled them to keep their armies on foot ; and the genius of Marlborough had seen how to utilise these factors of success.

2. The Union of England and Scotland and the Fall of Godolphin

While the pride of Louis XIV was being lowered by the hammer-blows of Marlborough, the Godolphin ministry had brought about an event of even greater significance in British history—the parliamentary Union of England and Scotland.

Scotland since the Revolution.—Scotland had been enjoying the beginnings of an unknown prosperity since the Revolution. Her Parliament was now free and sovereign. Her Church was also free. In 1696 she had fulfilled the ambitions of John Knox by establishing a school in every parish. By creating a banking system, she had begun to organise the thrift of her people. She had also conceived the ambition of creating an oversea trade of her own, and in 1695 had launched a South Sea Company, which (after various unsuccessful experiments) sent a group of settlers to *Darien*, on the Isthmus of Panama (1698). This adventure was discouraged by William III, because it was bound to arouse the hostility of Spain. In fact, the settlers were attacked by the Spaniards, and decimated by fever ; and every penny invested in the venture was lost. The Scots attributed this failure to English jealousy, and anti-English feeling grew strong.

* School Atlas, Plate 50*a*.

Scotland and the Succession.—This was the more serious because the question of succession to the crown had to be decided. When the Scots failed to imitate the English Act of Settlement, negotiations for a Union were opened. They broke down upon the prickly nationalism of the Scots, who in 1702 passed an *Act of Security*, providing that the English king should not be also king of Scotland unless he accepted "limitations" which would have made the Scottish Parliament independent. Even more alarming, another Act ordered the general arming of the Scottish nation (1703)—and this at a time when the great war with France was at a critical stage. Thereupon the English militia of the northern counties was called out, and the English Parliament passed resolutions threatening to treat Scotland (especially in trade) as a foreign State, "unless a union be had." It looked as if war between England and Scotland was at hand.

The Act of Union.—Fortunately a more moderate party now gained the ascendancy in Scotland, and negotiations were resumed. Equality of trade throughout the English dominions, which would follow from Union, was the bribe to win Scottish assent. The negotiations went on through 1706. It was agreed that the Scottish Church system and the Scottish legal system should not be interfered with. With great wisdom, the English negotiators showed much generosity in making the necessary financial adjustments. While Scotland obtained sixteen representative peers, and forty-five members of the united House of Commons (one-eleventh of the whole) she was to provide only one-fortieth of the revenues of the United Kingdom; and she was to receive £400,000 to pay out the shareholders of her bankrupt colonial enterprise. On these terms a treaty was concluded, which passed through both parliaments early in 1707; and on May 1st, 1707, the separate kingdoms of England and Scotland ceased to exist, and the *United Kingdom of Great Britain*, with a new flag, the "Union Jack," blending the white cross of St. Andrew with the red cross of St. George, took its place. The union was at first intensely unpopular in Scotland: on a democratic vote it would certainly have been rejected. It was unpopular in England also. Nevertheless, it was the beginning of happier days for both countries, and especially for Scotland.

Balance of Parties in England.—It was a fortunate thing that in 1707 the Tories were not in power, for they would not have been likely to accept the establishment of Presbyterianism. Godolphin

was already largely depending upon Whig votes ; and when, in 1708, the ablest of the Tories, Harley and St. John, left his ministry, it became exclusively Whig. There were 190 Tories in the House of Commons and only 150 Whigs, but a solid body of 100 placemen who steadily voted for the Government, whatever its complexion, ensured him a majority. If the Act of Settlement were to come into force, as was intended, when Anne died, this convenient arrangement would have come to an end, because it forbade placemen to sit in the House of Commons. But in 1708 an Act was passed which limited the exclusion to the holders of offices created after 1705. This Act made the rise of the cabinet system possible.

Fall of Godolphin.—After 1708 the power of Marlborough and Godolphin rapidly declined. Their failure to make peace was highly unpopular. Public opinion was stimulated against the war by Swift's brilliant pamphlet, the *Conduct of the Allies* * (1711). The Tories vigorously took up the cause of peace. And another ground of attack was provided by the case of *Dr. Sacheverell*, a Tory divine and a pompous windbag, who preached two violent High Church sermons in which he attacked the ministry. The Government foolishly impeached him, and the Whig majority in the House of Lords suspended him for three years. He became a popular hero, for no particular reason, and made a triumphal progress through the midlands : evidently the High Church party was very strong. Finally, Queen Anne, who had quarrelled with the domineering Duchess of Marlborough, was persuaded by her new favourite, Mrs. Masham, and by Mrs. Masham's cousin, the Tory leader Harley, to dismiss the ministry (1710).

3. The Tory Supremacy and the Plans of Bolingbroke

Harley and St. John.—The complete change of ministers which took place in 1710 gave power into the hands of the Tories. They now commanded the votes of the placemen. An election in 1710 increased their own following in the House. And, two years later, by the creation of twelve peers, they turned the Whig majority in the House of Lords into a minority. The Tory ascendancy thus established lasted until 1714. Its leaders were Robert Harley, now created Earl of Oxford, and Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke.

* This pamphlet is worth reading as a model of controversial method.

These two men were agreed upon the necessity of ending the war; but otherwise they differed greatly. Harley was a moderate-minded man, with Dissenting connections, who had been trying to educate his party into accepting the Revolution Settlement: he had been largely responsible for the Act of Settlement, so surprising a product of a Tory government. Bolingbroke, on the other hand, was a brilliant and unprincipled sceptic, whose chief desire was to destroy the Whigs; and for that purpose, sceptic as he was, he was not ashamed to hound on the High Church Tories into a new persecution of the Dissenters.

The Treaty of Utrecht.—The first act of the new Government was to recall Marlborough, and to disgrace him by bringing against him unanswerable charges of peculation. He had no defence; and could only retire to the Continent. He was succeeded in his command by the Duke of Ormond, who was ordered to do nothing; and, without consultation with the allies, negotiations were promptly opened with Louis XIV. The way in which peace was negotiated was a model of how such matters ought not to be settled; and the desertion of the Catalans, who had been encouraged to rebel by promises of protection, and were now left to the vengeance of Philip V, was highly discreditable. But the terms of the *Treaty of Utrecht* * (1713), which resulted from these negotiations, were in themselves wise and sound. Philip V was allowed to retain the crown of Spain, on condition that it should never be united with that of France; Austria became dominant in Italy, and received the Spanish Netherlands, thus forming a barrier between France and Holland. Great Britain kept Gibraltar and Minorca, and with them naval supremacy in the Mediterranean. She also kept Acadia in the New World; and the island of Newfoundland, on which there had been both English and French trading settlements, became British, subject to certain French fishing rights. Thus the two gate-posts of the St. Lawrence were in British hands. Britain also secured the "Asiento," *i.e.* the right of sending one trading ship yearly to Spanish America, and of importing to the Spanish dominions 4,800 negro slaves per annum. This concession was regarded as one of the greatest achievements of English diplomacy. The Treaty of Utrecht may be said to have marked the definite establishment and recognition of British naval and colonial superiority.

* There is a map showing the results of the Treaty of Utrecht in the larger Atlas, Plate 59*a*.

Attack on the Whigs and the Dissenters.—While the war-policy of the Whigs was being overthrown by these negotiations, a systematic campaign was opened at home to destroy the power of the Whigs and to establish securely the power of the Tories. In 1710 an Act was passed restricting membership of the House of Commons to owners of landed estates worth more than £300 a year in the case of borough members, and £600 a year in the case of county members: this was meant to exclude the "moneyed" interest, who supported the Whigs. Sir Robert Walpole, the ablest Whig debater in the House of Commons, was silenced by a baseless charge of corruption, for which he was expelled from the House and imprisoned in the Tower. An attack was also directed against the Dissenters. On several occasions an Occasional Conformity Bill (to prevent Dissenters from qualifying for office by taking the sacrament) had been introduced. It was carried in 1711, with the enthusiastic support of Bolingbroke, who was himself an Occasional Conformist, since, being an atheist, he could not otherwise have held office. Next year (1712) the opponents of toleration for Dissenters in England enacted a measure giving toleration to Anglican Dissenters in Scotland. Finally, as a last blow against the Dissenters, Bolingbroke framed a *Schism Act* which was carried in 1714. Excluded from the universities and the public schools, the Dissenters had created schools of their own. The Act aimed at ruining these schools by forbidding any person not licensed by a bishop to teach in any school.

Plan of a Jacobite Restoration.—Behind this attack on the Whigs and their supporters lay a deeper plan: no less than a restoration of the exiled Stewarts, in defiance of the Act of Settlement. For the Tory leaders knew that if the Hanoverian line was allowed to succeed, the influence of the Whigs would probably revive. Secret communications were opened with the Pretender in 1713. The Pretender, to his honour, refused to become a Protestant, though this would probably have ensured his succession; and at this Harley began to waver. Bolingbroke, who cared nothing for religion, was ready to go on, and persuaded the queen to dismiss Harley.

Collapse of the Plot.—All was going well for the realisation of the great design. The Whig nobles, in alarm, were preparing for armed resistance, and a new civil war seemed almost inevitable; when, two days after Harley's dismissal, the queen had a stroke of apoplexy. Her death was plainly imminent. A Cabinet Council

was held to decide upon the course of action to be taken. Bolingbroke, left to himself, would no doubt have persuaded his colleagues to go on with the scheme. But two Whig magnates, the Dukes of Argyll and Somerset, forced their way into the Cabinet, on the ground that as members of the Privy Council they had a right to be consulted. Their presence turned the waverers. A special envoy was sent to summon the Elector of Hanover. The fleet was called out, and precautions were promptly taken against any possibility of resistance. Bolingbroke's scheme had failed. When George I landed (September 1714), and when his first Parliament threatened an impeachment of the fallen ministers, Bolingbroke fled to France (1715), where for some years he acted as Secretary of State to the Pretender whom he had tried to use as the instrument of his ambition. The chief result of his folly was to ensure the domination of the Whigs for half a century.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE TRANSITION TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

1. Political and Social Conditions

A Century of Conflict.—The peaceful accession of George I brought to an end the century of religious and political conflict which began with the peaceful accession of James I. James I's accession was a triumph for hereditary right ; George I's a triumph for parliamentary sovereignty. Save for the last hopeless flickers of Jacobitism, both the constitutional and the religious conflicts were at an end for more than a century. The supremacy of Parliament had been established ; not even George III ever ventured to challenge it again.

The Character of Parliament.—This omnipotent Parliament was in no sense a democratic body. It was the organ of a governing class, the class of landowners. At the end of the eighteenth century it was laid down in the law-courts as an axiom that " those who own the land should rule the land " ; and this aphorism sufficiently well reflected actual practice. The House of Lords was filled with the greatest landowning magnates. Membership of the

House of Commons was limited by law to gentlemen of landed estate; and if this law was not rigidly enforced, the exceptions were very few, and mainly consisted of younger sons of the great landed families. The franchise in the county constituencies was limited to landowners—the "forty-shilling freeholders." But (except at times of great excitement) the small freeholder was content to leave the nomination of his representatives in the hands of his powerful neighbours, and for two generations the real choice of the members for Yorkshire took place in Lord Rockingham's drawing-room. As for the boroughs, most of them were modest market-towns lying at the park-gates of some great man, whose lead they naturally followed. The right of voting was fixed by a great variety of local customs. In some cases the franchise was limited to the occupiers of particular strips of land called "burgages," which it was easy for a rich man to buy up. In other cases the corporation of the borough nominated its representatives, and as the members of most corporations sat for life and filled up vacancies in their own membership, it was easy to get control over them. In yet other cases the franchise belonged to freemen, usually elected by the corporations; and batches of freemen of the right complexion could be nominated on the eve of an election at the request of a borough "patron." In some boroughs (such as the dockyard towns) the voters were mostly government servants who would lose their jobs if they did not vote for government candidates. There were only a few boroughs, such as Westminster and Preston, in which there was a democratic electorate, and even in these places the voters expected to be paid for their votes. It was therefore easy for a man with wealth and family influence to get control of a group of borough seats if he cared to do so.

The Landowning Oligarchy.—Thus, when the power of monarchy was overthrown, its place was taken by the power of a landowning oligarchy, which retained its domination, practically unchallenged, until the next great revolution, in the nineteenth century. The eighteenth century, which was now opening, was the golden age of the landowning oligarchy. It controlled not only national government but (except in the towns, which included less than one-quarter of the population) local government as well.

The Justices of the Peace.—All the functions of local government in the rural areas were in the control of the Justices of the Peace, who were the leading local gentry, appointed by the Crown on the nomination of the Lord-Lieutenant of each county.

And the Justices of the Peace were no longer subject to the close supervision which the Privy Council had given to them under the Tudors and early Stewarts. The Privy Council had become a large and formal body, which never met as a whole. Its place had gradually been taken, since the Restoration, by a "Cabinet Council" of Ministers, who practically confined themselves to questions of national policy; and the Justices of the Peace were left very much to themselves. If they chose, they could be petty local tyrants. The novels of the eighteenth century, from *Pamela* and *Tom Jones* to *Caleb Williams*,* show that they often abused their powers. But in actual fact, the Justices were much less active than they had been under the Tudors. They had ceased to trouble themselves with the fixing of wages and the regulation of apprenticeship; and they left the management of the Poor Law largely in the hands of the parish overseers. The age of *laissez-faire* in government had begun.

Buttresses of the Oligarchy.—The powers of the landowning oligarchy cannot have been seriously abused, for there was little or no active protest against them. The rule of the landowning class was, in fact, willingly accepted, almost as part of the order of nature. It was, in truth, deeply rooted. The legal profession was closely allied with it, judges and barristers being nearly always members of the landed families, while attorneys and solicitors drew their livelihood mainly from serving them. The Church was equally closely linked, bishoprics and good livings going nearly always to "men of family," while the poorer livings fell to their dependants. The universities had become in part the playgrounds of the aristocracy, where men of family wore "tufts" that were assiduously "hunted" by needy dons; in part the universities were funnels through which the brains of the nation were sucked into the service of the ruling class. The best endowed schools had become the preserves of the ruling class, where their sons underwent a Spartan discipline, and studied the manners and ideals of the patricians of old Rome, whom in many ways the English ruling class resembled.

Safeguards against Abuse of Power.—It was a real safeguard against the abuse of their immense powers by this ruling aristocracy that it had divided itself into two parties, jealous and watchful of one another. Not only in national government and in Parliament, but in local government and on every county bench of

* By Samuel Richardson, Henry Fielding and William Godwin respectively.

magistrates, the rival parties were constantly on the watch for one another's blunders or injustices, in the hope of weakening or discrediting one another. It was a further and still greater safeguard that the Reign of Law had been very thoroughly established in England, and that the habit of respect for law was deeply rooted in all classes. In the British lands, alone of all the world, nobody was exempted from the ordinary law of the land; the judges were absolutely independent, and were dominated by a great professional tradition of impartiality; and through the jury system the whole nation had a share in the administration of the law. For these reasons, the supremacy of the ruling class of landowners worked, on the whole, very well. Indeed, it reflected the social order of the nation, which was still predominantly rural and agricultural. The landowners were the natural leaders of a community which was mainly engaged in tilling the soil, and of which a large proportion had some share of ownership in the soil which they tilled.

Social Classes.—English rural society was roughly divided into four classes, which shaded insensibly into one another, so that there was no sharp cleavage anywhere. First there were the *Magnates*, owners of very great estates, who lived in splendour in their princely mansions, the noblest of which were erected during this period; they also had their town houses, where they gathered annually for the Season while Parliament and the law-courts were sitting, and thus brought together spokesmen of every part of the country. There were about seventy of these great ruling families, and it seemed natural that they should play the principal part in the management of national affairs. This highest class shaded gradually into the *Squirearchy*, men of substantial estates, living on their land, often keeping a house in the county town, and playing a very active part in county affairs. Next came the *Yeomanry*, though it was impossible to distinguish between a small squire and a substantial yeoman. Sometimes farming their own land, and sometimes renting farms, they formed a solid and prosperous middle class, from which the upper classes were steadily recruited; and, through the parish vestries, and in the offices of churchwarden and overseer, they mainly managed village business. Finally there was the great class of the *Peasantry*—the majority of the whole nation—not, as now, wholly wage-earning labourers, but including large numbers of smallholders; even the day labourer often drew a substantial part of his livelihood from a little holding and pasture rights on the village common.

Industrial Classes.—Great as had been the advance of English trade and industry during the seventeenth century,* they were still of minor importance, in comparison with agriculture. The woollen industry, still far the greatest of English manufactures, was mainly carried on in three great areas—the west-country, Norfolk, and the West Riding of Yorkshire. It was still largely carried on in the homes of the weavers, who often combined with their trade the cultivation of a little land ; while the spinning of yarn for the weavers gave occupation to thousands of spinning-wheels in the cottages of rural workers, whose livelihood was thus supplemented. Although the capitalist "clothiers" (who bought up raw wool, got it spun in the cottages, and then had the yarn woven to their own patterns by the weavers) were winning an increasing control over the industry, it was still a "domestic" industry, and was closely connected with the agricultural work of the rural population. Mining and metal-work stood more aloof from rural life, but they were as yet on a very modest scale. There was therefore no sharp cleavage between the industrial population and the rural population ; and the English society was still a coherent body.

The Dominance of London.—Even the population of the towns was mainly engaged in rural marketing. Only a few towns, engaged in foreign trade, had a separate economic life of their own—London, Bristol, Southampton, Hull, and (just beginning to become important) Liverpool. London was the only really big town. Its population of about half a million made it the greatest city of the western world ; and the great companies, such as the Bank of England, the East India Company, and the South Sea Company, which had their centres in London, gave to it a political importance which outweighed that of all the other English towns put together. The city of London was, in fact, the only powerful factor in English life which was independent of the landowning class. But even in London, the potent influence of snobbery (which has been one of the chief moulding forces in English life, leading each class to imitate the class above it) was impelling the rich merchants to identify themselves with the ruling class by acquiring estates ; and their sons, as landowners, easily became absorbed in the ruling class. Lord Danby, later Duke of Leeds, who played so great a part in the reign of Charles II and in the Revolution, was an example of this : his

* See the map of England before the Industrial Revolution, School Atlas, Plate 41*a*.

great-grandfather had been a London merchant in Elizabeth's reign.

An Era of Contentment.—England, in short, was in a state of social harmony and contentment. Her prosperity aroused the admiration of foreign visitors, who especially admired the well-being of her peasantry, in contrast with the wretched lot of the peasantry of France, Germany, and Italy. It has been asserted that there has never been a time since the era of the Antonine Emperors in Rome when prosperity and contentment were so widely diffused as in England during the first half of the eighteenth century. The claim is exaggerated, but it has a foundation of truth.

Progress of Scotland and Ireland. — Scotland was less prosperous. But she was enjoying the first period of settled peace and orderly government in her history. Her people, more generally educated than any other people in Europe, with a school in every parish and no less than four universities, were beginning to turn their energies to wealth-making, and to utilise the opportunities afforded by the Union for expanding trade. But beyond the "Highland line" * the primitive conditions of tribal life still survived, and travellers who penetrated the Highlands during the first half of the eighteenth century brought back amazing accounts of modes of life that were not far removed from savagery. In Ireland the barbarous treatment of the Catholics had reduced a large proportion of the population to a pitiful state of poverty, of which Dean Swift gave mordant descriptions. Yet even Ireland saw some improvement of prosperity in the first half of the eighteenth century, thanks to the existence of settled peace. If not contented, her people were at least submissive.

2. The Movement of Ideas

Decay of Enthusiasm.—Contentment often means stagnation, and the period which opened with the accession of George I—and, indeed, the quarter of a century which preceded that event—was in many respects a stagnant interval in the development of national life. The fervid and passionate beliefs of the seventeenth century had burnt themselves out. They had been succeeded by a cynical and materialist temper. Nobody believed strongly enough

* School Atlas, Plate 38*a*.

in anything to run great risks or to make great sacrifices. Religious ardour had died down, not only in England but in Scotland, and, indeed, throughout Europe. In the ruling classes Latitudinarianism, or a polite scepticism, was the prevailing fashion. Anglo-Catholic and Puritan alike had lost their intensity of belief. Even in the Dissenting communities ardour had decayed, and it is significant that during the first half of the eighteenth century the majority of English Presbyterians became Unitarians, while in Scotland the reign of the Moderates succeeded the fanaticism of the Covenanters. "Enthusiasm" had been the note of the seventeenth century: the eighteenth despised "enthusiasm," and was the age of reason and good sense.

The Age of Prose.—This change of temper was reflected in the literature of the period. The first half of the seventeenth century was an age of great poetry. It began with the supreme tragedies of Shakespeare, and passed on to the austere and profound poetry of Milton; even in prose, its exalted temper was expressed in the rich and mystical eloquence of Sir Thomas Browne or the majesty of Jeremy Taylor. The second half of the seventeenth century was an age of disillusioned fervour: its representative poet was the masculine satirist Dryden, and it gave birth to the cynical drama of the Restoration wits, which reached its highest point after the Revolution, with Congreve. The reign of Queen Anne is always accounted a great literary epoch. But it was essentially an age of prose, limpid, persuasive, and sweetly reasonable, as in Addison's and Steele's essays, or grimly sardonic as in Swift's great satires * and pamphlets: even the great poet of this age, Pope, who is one of the supreme masters of pointed phrase, appeals always to the head, not to the heart. The age of Shakespeare and the age of Pope were both great ages, but there is a mighty contrast between them, and the contrast is a measure of the change that had taken place in the mind of the nation. The age of poetry had given place to the age of prose; the age of faith and ardour to the age of reason and common sense.

Progress of Science.—The most notable mark of the new era was that it saw almost the beginning of modern organised science. Great investigators had not been lacking in the previous era: Bacon

* *Gulliver's Travels* was designed, not as a fairy tale for children, but as a fierce satire on the politics of Swift's time.

had foreseen the new scientific methods, and the first of the great English men of science—Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, who was a court physician in the time of Charles I—pursued his inquiries by methods that were in accord with the strictest canons of modern research. But it was in the reign of Charles II that organised and co-operative research began, with the foundation of the Royal Society (1663); and before the accession of George I the supreme genius of English science, Isaac Newton, had not only set forth his epoch-making discoveries, but had founded a school of the new learning. Even mechanical invention was beginning. Newcomen's steam-pump (1705), which made deep coal-mining possible, foreshadowed the coming of the age of steam. The quiet, non-partisan, patient methods of the laboratory were slow to conquer the controversial realms of politics and theology. But even here argument was taking the place of persecution. Hobbes and Locke were working out the theory of politics; Bolingbroke was trying to find a logical basis for Toryism; and a crowd of theological writers were discussing the foundations of belief in a spirit of rationalism that would have been impossible a century earlier.

Supplementary Reading on Book V

The *Short History of the British Commonwealth*, Bk. V, Chaps. V–IX, covers the subject-matter of this Book more fully: see especially Chap. VI on the ideas of the political parties, and Chap. VIII on economic developments. Maitland's *Constitutional History* (Period IV: Public Law at the Death of William III) is illuminating on constitutional questions. For the great period of colonial rivalry, see Seeley's *Expansion of England*. Mahan's *Influence of Sea-power on History* is very important for this period, bringing out the significance of the naval war which most of the books underestimate. Lord Acton has three very good lectures on this period (*Lectures on Modern History*). Morris's *Age of Queen Anne* (Epochs of Modern History) is a good short book.

BOOK VI

COLONIAL SUPREMACY AND DISRUPTION

(1714–1782)

FIG. 24.—North America, 1714–1783.

BOOK VI

COLONIAL SUPREMACY AND DISRUPTION (1714–1782)

The outstanding feature of British history in the two generations following the accession of the Hanoverian line was the rapid establishment of a complete British supremacy in America, promptly followed by the disruption of the colonial empire which had been built up by a century and a half of steady work. The moral of these events was that the old colonial system, established in the seventeenth century, was unsound.

During the same period Britain became, almost in spite of herself, the mistress of an astonishing empire in India, the organisation and government of which presented problems of extreme complexity and difficulty. The period which raised these issues of government in the New World and in the Old is of the highest significance and interest.

In the internal development of the British peoples the period does not, at first sight, present any such outstanding features of interest. Yet the methods by which the Whigs established their "Venetian oligarchy," the rise of cabinet government as an outcome of these methods, the challenge delivered by George III both to the power of the oligarchy and to the cabinet system, are all full of interest. Throughout the greater part of the period there was a strange absence of ideas and ideals in the ruling class, which, if it had continued, might have been ruinous. But a new religious and humanitarian movement, springing from the preaching of the Wesleys, was at work during the second half of the period. It was to have a profound influence upon the development of British civilisation, and upon the character of the British Empire.

The period falls naturally into three clearly marked sections:

first, twenty-five years of apparent stagnation (1714–1739) during which, however, the cabinet system of government was worked out; then twenty-four years of warfare in Europe, America and Asia, ending in the dazzling ascendancy recognised in 1763; and finally twenty years of strife and disruption, when the Empire, so brilliantly won, broke into fragments, and the British power seemed suddenly to have fallen to the second rank.

CHAPTER XXIX

WALPOLE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE WHIG OLIGARCHY (1714–1739)

1. The Establishment of Whig Power

The New King.—George I * was a singularly unattractive and uninteresting man, who had locked up his wife for life, and was not on speaking terms with his son. He could not speak a word of English, and did not try to learn. He was quite unable to understand British conditions. Convinced that the Tories wanted to turn him out, he was content to leave the conduct of affairs entirely in the hands of the Whigs, with results that were highly important for the development of the British system of government.

Jacobite Conspiracy.—It was impossible that anybody should feel loyalty towards such a king; and it was inevitable that an attempt should be made to overthrow him. Bolingbroke, in France, immediately got to work upon the plans for a general rising, which it was hoped Louis XIV would support. Unfortunately for him, Louis died in 1715, and the Duke of Orleans, who acted as Regent for the infant Louis XV, wished for his own reasons to remain on good terms with the British Government; instead of helping, the Regent did much to hinder the plans of the Jacobites. The main plan of the conspirators was that the Duke of Ormond (who had fled with Bolingbroke) was to land in the south-west, and raise the Tory gentry of that area. Meanwhile there was to be a rebellion in the north of England, another in Wales, and another in the Highlands,

* Read Thackeray's essay on George I in *The Four Georges*.

where the clans that hated the Campbells could always be roused. Bolingbroke tried to persuade the Pretender to announce his conversion to Protestantism. If he had done so, there might have been a chance of success, but he refused.

Failure in England.—The excellent secret service of the Whigs kept them fully informed of all that was going on. The critical points in the south-west were garrisoned, and the fleet was on the watch to prevent any invasion in force. The result was that, though Ormond landed in Plymouth, he had to slink away again, with nothing done. Nothing came of the projected rising in Wales. A considerable rising took place in Northumberland, under a wealthy squire named Forster and the Earl of Derwentwater. They were joined by the Jacobites of the Scottish border, under Lord Nithsdale, Lord Kenmure, and others. They marched into Lancashire in the hope of raising the Catholics of that county. But they were easily disposed of at *Preston* (November 1715) by a force which numbered less than one-third of their own, and the northern rising collapsed.

The Scottish Rising.—Meanwhile the standard had been raised in Scotland,* at Braemar, by the Earl of Mar, a very ill-chosen leader. Some ten thousand Highlanders joined him.† But he allowed his southward march to be checked by Argyle, with 3,000 men, at *Sheriffmuir*, on the day after the rout of Preston (November 1715); and after this check the dispirited force melted away. The Pretender landed in Scotland after the defeat, made no attempt to retrieve it, and retired once more to France. This spiritless business discredited the Jacobite cause, already a dying one. The Whigs were wise enough not to exact harsh vengeance. Two peers and thirty commoners were executed. But pardons were freely granted. The Jacobite exiles began to slink home. Even Bolingbroke was contemptuously allowed to return in 1722, on condition that he took no part in politics.

The Whig Control of Parliament.—The defeat of the risings of 1715 secured the position of the Whigs. In 1716 they passed a *Septennial Act*, whereby the duration of Parliament was extended to seven years. This gave them time to establish their power very solidly. The foundation of their strength lay in their

* School Atlas, Plate 39*a*.

† Scott's *Rob Roy*—one of the best of his tales—gives a vivid picture of the condition of Scotland in this period.

control of all the patronage of the Crown. Every office in Church and State was filled with loyal Whigs. They already controlled a working majority in the House of Lords, and no new peers were created who were not Whigs. In 1719 it was even proposed, in a *Peerage Bill* introduced by Lord Sunderland, to forbid the creation of any more peers, as a security against such a measure as the creation of twelve Tory peers in 1712; but this ill-conceived measure was rejected by the House of Commons on the instigation of Sir Robert Walpole. Over the House of Commons the supremacy of the Whigs was secured partly by the assiduity with which the great Whig magnates got control over borough seats; partly by the fact that the forty-five Scottish members voted solidly for the Government, their election being managed by the Duke of Argyle or his brother the Earl of Islay; partly by controlling what were known as "government boroughs"—dockyard towns where Government employees formed a majority of the voters, or the little boroughs in the royal duchy of Cornwall; but most of all by the fact that, thanks to the control of royal patronage, there was a solid block of 120 "placemen" in the House of Commons, who would lose their places if they voted against the Government. Thus the ascendancy of the Whigs was complete and impregnable.

The Commons under the Whigs.—A Whig House of Commons consisted of three blocks: the placemen; the nominee members who were returned by patrons of "rotten" or "pocket" boroughs; and the "independent country gentlemen," mostly members for counties or for the larger boroughs. In the last class there were a few Tories, never more than fifty or sixty. There was always the possibility of an opposition being formed by a group of dissatisfied borough-owners backed by the independent country gentlemen. But the Government always had the whip hand, and so long as the Whigs held together they were irresistible.

Cabinet Government.—Another source of Whig power was that, as the king could not speak English, he ceased to attend the meetings of his ministers, or Cabinet Councils. Somebody had to take the chair in his place, and this somebody tended to be very like a modern Prime Minister, though the office of Prime Minister was not recognised by law, and, indeed, was held to be unconstitutional. The members of the Cabinet naturally strove to conceal any differences that might arise amongst them. They kept no record of their discussions, and gave their advice to the king as a united body, through

their chairman. Thus were established the essentials of Cabinet Government—the joint responsibility of a ministry supported by a majority in the House of Commons. The upgrowth of this system was gradual, and many regarded it as a dangerous infringement of the principles of the constitution. Bolingbroke later developed this line of criticism with great force. The Whigs themselves did not realise that they were introducing a great and valuable political device. They were merely organising their own oligarchical power, and they strove to keep their methods as much as possible in obscurity. But the essentials of the cabinet system—the unity and coherence of the body of ministers, and their joint responsibility for policy—first came into existence as an instrument of the Whig oligarchy.

2. The Ministry of Stanhope (1714–1720)

Stanhope.—During the first years of the reign, there was sharp rivalry between two groups of Whig leaders, Stanhope and Sunderland on the one side, Walpole and Townshend on the other. Stanhope, whose influence was strongest until 1720, was a soldier-statesman of Marlborough's school, and had led an English army in Spain during the Spanish Succession War. His interest was mainly in foreign affairs, which were extremely complicated during these years.

The Alliance with France.—The main feature of Stanhope's policy was the maintenance of an alliance with France, for the preservation of European peace. This was made possible by a remarkable reversal of French policy which took place after the death of Louis XIV in 1715. The new king, Louis XV, who was Louis XIV's great-grandson, was a sickly infant; and the Regent (the Duke of Orleans) was for two reasons anxious to preserve peace, especially with England. One reason was that France, during the recent wars, had sacrificed the chance of building up her oversea trade and empire, and was now eager to recover lost ground. The other was that, if (as seemed likely) Louis XV should die, the Regent would be the next heir, provided that Philip V of Spain (Louis XIV's grandson) was held to the renunciation of his rights to the French crown which had been one of the conditions of the Treaty of Utrecht. The Regent, therefore, feared Spain, and wanted to uphold the Treaty of Utrecht.

Spanish Restlessness.—Spain, on the other hand, had undergone a real revival, and under a very able minister, Cardinal Alberoni,

was tempted to make a bid for the reversal of some of the Utrecht provisions. To prevent this, France made, in 1717, a Triple Alliance with the "Maritime Powers," England and Holland; and when Spain attacked Sicily, a British fleet wiped out the Spanish fleet at *Cape Passaro* (1718). Meanwhile, Alberoni made friends with the warlike King Charles XII of Sweden, and planned a Jacobite rising in Scotland. British fleets blockaded the Swedish coast, while the king's Hanoverian troops took the bishoprics of Bremen and Verden from Sweden. A small Spanish force was actually landed at *Loch Shiel* (1719); but it was easily disposed of. All through these years, the French alliance was the sheet-anchor of British policy. It undoubtedly did much to preserve the peace of Europe, and it was a valuable safeguard against any renewal of Jacobite troubles. It lasted unimpaired until 1733.

Domestic Quiescence.—In domestic affairs, the Stanhope government was careful to avoid any cause of disturbance. It repealed Bolingbroke's Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, and thus relieved the Dissenters. It annually passed an Indemnity Bill for those Dissenters who had held office in despite of the provisions of the Test Act. But it made no attempt to remove the disabilities of the Dissenters, for fear of arousing a High-Church agitation. This timidity was characteristic of the Whig government. Their policy was to "let sleeping dogs lie," and give the country time to settle down; and they adhered to this policy throughout their ascendancy, attempting no constructive legislation of any kind. The only important new law of this period (apart from the Septennial Act) was the *Declaratory Act* (1719), which formally asserted the right of the English Parliament to legislate for Ireland over the head of the Irish Parliament—a monstrous assertion of power.

Growth of Oversea Trade.—The nation (or the most active part of it) was, indeed, engrossed during these years by the prospects of wealth through the development of oversea trade, especially in the tropics. This was not peculiar to Britain. All Europe had been awakened to the value of oversea and tropical trade. The revived Spanish monarchy was vigorously developing its tropical empire, and extending its control over Texas and California. Portugal was drawing great wealth from Brazil. All the western nations, including the Danes and the Prussians, were striving to get a share of the lucrative African slave trade, and of the sugar trade

with the West Indies. The French were showing a remarkable activity. Their sugar-islands in the West Indies were beating their English competitors. They founded, in 1717, the new colony of Louisiana at the mouth of the Mississippi, and their enterprising agents were busy dotting forts and trading-stations up the line of the Mississippi and about the Great Lakes, thus claiming the vast central plain of North America.* In India, also, a French East India Company was getting for the first time a substantial share of trade, in rivalry with the English and the Dutch.

English Supremacy.—The English had much the best of the rivalry in India, where in 1717 their Company obtained the valuable concession of relief from all duties on the goods they exported from Bengal. In the west, also, the English had a great advantage in their possession of the *Asiento*, which gave them a monopoly of licensed trade with the Spanish dominions, though they, like the other trading nations, also engaged in a very active smuggling trade with these rich lands.

The Great Triangle.—The most lucrative branch of over-sea trade was the "Great Triangle," whereby European vessels took out cheap cargoes to West Africa, exchanged them for negro slaves, took these to the West Indies, where they sold for high prices, and filled up with home cargoes of sugar and tobacco. London, Bristol, and Liverpool (but in this period especially Bristol) were coining fortunes from this traffic, in which they had definitely beaten their foreign rivals.

The South Sea Bubble.—There seemed to be no limit to the wealth that could be made from the "South Sea" trade, and this led to a mania of speculation, both in France and in England. In France the gigantic schemes of the Scotsman John Law caused widespread ruin. In England the South Sea Company actually offered to take over the whole National Debt, at a reduced rate of interest, buying out the creditors either with its own shares or with cash; and so fantastic were the expectations of profit from tropical trade that this proposal led to wild speculation in South Sea stock. The speculative mania spread to the whole field of finance, and preposterous proposals such as Swift satirised in his *Voyage to Laputa* † trapped the savings of the credulous. The result was a terrible crash (1720) and

* School Atlas, Plate 50*a*.

† The whole of *Gulliver's Travels* (of which the Voyage to Laputa is a part) was a satire upon the politics of this period.

wholesale ruin, in which the Government was involved, because it had caused all the trouble by accepting the original scheme. The Postmaster-General committed suicide; the Chancellor of the Exchequer was expelled from the House of Commons; Stanhope (who may be described as the Prime Minister, though he would have repudiated the title) died of a fit brought on by the attacks directed against him.

Fortunately for the Whigs, their ablest man, Robert Walpole, was out of office, and was able to step into the breach and turn what might have been the ruin of the Whigs into a source of strength. The skill with which he handled the situation demonstrated his mastery of finance, and established his power, which lasted for twenty years.

3. The Government of Walpole (1720–1739)

Character of Walpole.—Robert Walpole * was at once the ablest and the most characteristic of the statesmen of the Whig regime. He was the master of the House of Commons, not only because he perfected the Whig machinery for maintaining a majority, but because he loved the House, thoroughly understood it, and was a great master of the arts of parliamentary debate. He was, in truth (with the possible exception of Pym), the first of the long line of great parliamentarians, and the first powerful minister to rule through the House of Commons. It was not until his fall from power that he accepted a peerage; and he regarded his removal to the House of Lords as banishment. He was the first also of the line of great financiers (including the younger Pitt, Peel, and Gladstone) who have regarded sound finance as the very keystone of statesmanship. He was a coarse-grained man, shrewd, practical, and wholly free from any trace of idealism or enthusiasm; but he was also devoid of rancour, and singularly tolerant of hostile criticism. In his view the supreme aim of statesmanship was the maintenance of peace, the increase of material prosperity, and the avoidance of meddling with the lives of individuals. All these things the British lands enjoyed during his long period of power; and there is no period of equal length in modern British history in which there has been less to record.

* There is a good short Life of Walpole by John Morley (Twelve English Statesmen).

Walpole's Monopoly of Power.—Walpole's weakness was a dictatorial temper. He did not easily brook opposition ; and one after another of his colleagues was forced to resign—beginning with his brother-in-law Lord Townshend, who at first shared his power. He was thus more fully a " Prime Minister " than any earlier statesman, and it is commonly said that it was Walpole who determined the position of the Prime Minister as the " keystone of the Cabinet arch," and established his power of deciding who his colleagues should be.

The Opposition.—Naturally opposition sprang up against this monopolist of power. It clustered, at first, round the Prince of Wales, who was on bad terms with the king ; and when George I died, in 1727, it was hoped and expected that Walpole's power would come to an end. George II * was a much shrewder and more active man than his father, and he could speak English. Nevertheless he did not venture to depart from his father's dependence upon the Whigs. To the acute disappointment of the opposition, both the king and his able and sensible wife, Queen Caroline, gave all their confidence to Walpole, whose power became greater than ever. The opposition of those who were excluded from the sweets of office continued, finding a new centre in the court of the new Prince of Wales, who (in accordance with Hanoverian tradition) was on bad terms with his father. Walpole despised his opponents : " all these men have their price," he said ; and in regard to most of them he was probably right.

The Doctrines of Bolingbroke.—But in fact a new school of political thought was rising, which found its inspiration in Bolingbroke, now back from exile. In the *Craftsman*, a paper which he published in 1726–1727, and later and more fully in a little book called *The Patriot King*, written in 1738, Bolingbroke denounced the whole Whig system of party power built upon corruption, and prayed for the coming of a Patriot King who would call the ablest men into counsel, regardless of party, and refuse to be governed by a clique. Among those whom Bolingbroke influenced was a young man, William Pitt, † who was conscious of the possession of powers which the Whig ascendancy might never permit him to exercise. Pitt's fiery and tempestuous nature was, indeed, the very antithesis

* Read Thackeray's study of George II in *The Four Georges*.

† Two of Macaulay's best essays deal with Pitt.

of that of Walpole ; and in the later years of the minister's long career this young man was to give him a world of trouble.

Religious Lethargy.—The domestic history of Britain during Walpole's government was extraordinarily uneventful. The country had fallen into complete lethargy. The old religious controversies were dead. The Church and the dissenting bodies had lost all energy. The Church in especial suffered from the fact that all its higher offices were filled by men whose sole recommendation was political orthodoxy ; many of them, like the famous Hoadley, Bishop of Bangor, who was the centre of prolonged controversies, were more than suspected of disbelieving in some of the essential tenets of Christianity. The lower clergy, many of them High Churchmen shut out from any chance of promotion by that fact, were commonly neglectful of their duties. The need for the stirring of a new life was nowhere more plain than in the religious life of the nation.

Walpole's Finance.—In politics, as in religion, it was Walpole's aim to give the people no ground for excitement. His own main interest and achievement lay in the important but unemotional realm of finance. He greatly reduced and simplified the dues on trade. He started a Sinking Fund to pay off the National Debt. Trade throve as its burdens decreased, and for this Walpole deserves real credit. The only political excitement of the period, indeed, was caused by a sound and rational scheme of financial reform which he embodied in the *Excise Bill* of 1733. This was a scheme to abolish import duties on a number of goods on which the Treasury was cheated by smuggling, and to charge an excise instead, to be levied when the goods were taken out of the warehouses : this would not only have prevented smuggling, it would also have encouraged the re-exportation of these goods without payment of duty, and thus stimulated export trade. But a fantastic outcry was raised by the opposition, who pretended that in some mysterious way the excise would involve tyranny ; and Walpole, who would never face a storm, withdrew his proposals.

Wood's Halfpence and the Porteous Riot.—The only other popular excitements about domestic questions during Walpole's long tenure of power took place in Ireland and in Scotland. In 1723 there was a great outcry in Ireland because a contract for Irish copper coinage had been given to an Englishman named Wood. The contract was quite businesslike. But it gave to Dean Swift an opportunity for attacking the English Government which he used to

great effect in his satirical *Drapier's Letters*—the first public protest against the way in which the English ascendancy over Ireland was used. The second popular excitement was the Porteous Riot in Edinburgh (1736), which was caused by the hanging of a popular smuggler, and the too prompt use of firearms by his guards. This episode would never have found the place it has been given in all the books but for the emptiness of the period, and the fact that Scott used it as the theme of one of his best novels.* Another and much more important piece of work in Scotland which was carried out under Walpole was the construction of a number of roads through the Highlands by General Wade (1725), and the erection of Forts William and Augustus to hold down that wild region. This was, in fact, the beginning of the taming of the Highlands.

Neglect of the Colonies.—In colonial affairs Walpole took no interest. Here also he "let sleeping dogs lie," with unfortunate results. His Secretary of State, the fussy and incompetent Duke of Newcastle, notoriously never read the colonial despatches. Some of the American colonies were beginning to be jealous of control, and were showing their jealousy by refusing to vote the salaries of governors and judges for more than a year at a time, in order to keep them under control. This raised a question of vital importance, which ought to have been faced: it was later one of the causes of quarrel between the colonies and the mother-country. But Walpole refused to face it. He contented himself (1729) with advising the governors to take what they could get, and avoid friction. For thus shirking a difficult problem, he has been credited with wise statesmanship, and his lack of policy has been favourably compared with the mistakes made by his successors when the question had been made, by his neglect, too difficult for easy solution.

The Molasses Act.—But he did not always display this prudent inactivity in dealing with colonial questions. When the interests of the Exchequer were concerned, he made decisions which contributed greatly to intensify the difficulties. He found that the colonists were buying sugar from the French West Indies, because it was better and cheaper, when they ought to have been buying from the English West Indies. Walpole met this difficulty by the *Molasses Act* (1733), which imposed prohibitive duties against foreign sugar-products, and levied these duties in the colonial ports as well as in

* *The Heart of Midlothian.*

England. This not only interfered with a profitable (if illegal) branch of colonial trade, it also raised the question of the right of Parliament to raise taxes in America. Walpole further created a very bad precedent when in 1732 he actually prohibited the smelting of copper in the colonies. These restrictions upon colonial trade, which were considerably extended under later Whig ministries, contributed materially to create the discontent which flamed out into revolt when the danger from France was removed. Far from deserving any credit for his colonial policy, Walpole deserves condemnation for his failure to understand the causes which were already producing friction with the colonies, and which later—when the danger from the French had been removed—were to lead to disruption. Insight and imagination were needed to foresee these problems. But these are qualities of great statesmanship ; Walpole was without them.

Georgia.—One new colony, and one only, was founded in this period, which was less concerned with colonisation than with the wealth to be made from colonial trade. This was Georgia, the last of the famous thirteen.* It was established in 1733, and marked the appearance of a new motive for colonisation. The founder was General George Oglethorpe, a man of fashion, whose pity had been aroused by the sufferings of the debtors whom the cruel law of that period left to languish in gaol. The purpose of the colony was to give these unfortunates the chance of a new start in life. Oglethorpe also found room for a number of Highlanders, and for persecuted Protestants from Germany. He spent a large part of his fortune in nurturing the colony through its early troubles, and his work was a foreshadowing of the philanthropic movement which was to have a very important influence both in colonisation and in other spheres in the second half of the century. But Walpole can claim no share of credit for this achievement, which he regarded as unpractical "enthusiasm."

The Alliance with France.—Throughout all the earlier period of Walpole's government the alliance with France, which Stanhope had made, continued to be the keystone of British foreign policy. It was tested once more in 1725–1729, when the old enemies, Austria and Spain, unexpectedly came together. Both had grievances against Britain. Spain wanted to regain Gibraltar and

* School Atlas, Plate 50*a*.

Minorca. Austria wanted to get her share of tropical trade, and for that purpose to revive the prosperity of her Netherlands port of Antwerp, which had been ruined when, under the Treaty of Utrecht, the Dutch and the English insisted upon the closing of the Scheldt. The two discontented powers made an alliance in 1725, and Spain once more besieged Gibraltar. But France remained loyal to the alliance ; and without any serious fighting the trouble was settled by diplomacy.

The Alliance Strained.—The alliance, however, was not to last much longer. Both in France and in England politicians of the younger generation were losing patience with the tepid policy of peace. In France the younger men were eager for a more adventurous policy, and were inclined to urge that the natural alliance for France would be one with Spain, to challenge the trade supremacy of the Maritime Powers. In England also there was a similar impatience, and a feeling that a conflict for trade and colonial supremacy could not be long delayed. It was by the vigour with which he maintained this view that William Pitt first acquired fame.

The Polish Succession War.—The first serious strain upon the alliance came in 1733, when a dispute about the succession to the throne of Poland broke out, which involved the greater part of Europe in war. Poland, long weakened by an absurd constitution, was showing some signs of national revival, and when her foreign king died, she elected a Polish noble as his successor. Austria and Russia, wanting to keep Poland weak, insisted upon the election of their candidate, Augustus of Saxony. France supported the Polish candidate, and wanted Britain to join her. If Britain had done so, it is possible that Poland might have been saved from the ruin which already threatened her, and which came forty years later. Walpole stood aloof, and boasted, with some justification, that while 50,000 lives were being sacrificed over a question in which Britain had no direct concern, not a single British life was lost. That is the strongest possible argument for a policy of peace. But the result was that the Franco-British alliance, which had so long maintained an uneasy peace in Europe, came to an end ; and a long series of wars began which raged almost continuously for a generation, and in which Britain was inevitably involved.

The Breach with Spain.—France turned instead to Spain, and a treaty of alliance, known as the *First Family Compact*, was signed between the two Bourbon Powers in 1733. Instead of doing

anything for Poland, the allies devoted their attention to making conquests in Italy, with which we are not concerned. But one result of this alliance was that Spain, which had been the chief centre of unrest in Europe since 1715, was encouraged to take more vigorous action against the British smugglers in South American waters. They were becoming more and more active in defying the Spanish trade monopoly ; and Spain can hardly be blamed for trying to put a stop to their activities by means of a fleet of coast-guard vessels. But the stories of searches of English ships carried out on the high seas by Spanish coast-guards aroused a good deal of excitement in England, and were used as a ground of attack against the Government. And when one Captain Jenkins came home with a story of outrage, complained that his ear had been cut off, and in proof of his complaint produced the identical ear, carefully preserved in a bottle, and showed it to the House of Commons, Walpole's hand was at last forced. In 1739 he reluctantly declared war against Spain. The long era of painfully preserved quiescence was at an end ; and a struggle began which rapidly enlarged its scope until it covered the greater part of the world.

CHAPTER XXX

FIRST PHASE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR COLONIAL SUPREMACY (1739–1755)

1. The Spanish War and the War of the Austrian Succession

Nature of the War.—Walpole had been reluctant to enter upon war with Spain, not only because he detested all war, but because, knowing of the secret Family Compact of 1733, he feared its consequences. An effective union of the power of France and Spain had been the nightmare of British statesmen since 1698 ; now it seemed to be at hand. It was a disturbance of the Balance of Power in Europe which Walpole dreaded. He had not the imagination to foresee what was to be the actual outcome of this beginning—a struggle that would extend into every part of the globe, and end in the establishment of an amazing British supremacy on the seas and beyond them. With the possible exception of Pitt, nobody yet realised that an immense struggle for colonial supremacy was about to begin, and

that, for Britain, the issues oversea were of immeasurably greater importance than the issues in Europe.

The War at Sea.—Walpole strove to limit the range of the war as much as possible, and displayed no energy. In 1739 a small expedition under Admiral Vernon captured *Portobello*, which commanded the route followed by the Peruvian treasure from the Pacific to the Atlantic; but it was not retained. In 1741 an attack was directed against *Cartagena* in South America, but it was a complete failure. Meanwhile, in 1740, a plundering raid under Anson was sent round Cape Horn to attack the Pacific coast. Various misfortunes reduced his squadron to one ship, the *Centurion*; but, like Drake long before, he terrorised the coast of Chile and Peru, captured a great treasure-ship, and made his way home by the Cape of Good Hope—a gallant adventure, but of no military importance.*

The Fall of Walpole.—The futility of this method of carrying on war brought about the fall of Walpole (1742). Pitt thundered denunciations. All the Whig cliques whom Walpole had angered by excluding them from office joined in the attack, and a new ministry was constituted which brought them all in under a colourless figurehead, Lord Wilmington. There was but one man of great ability in this ministry—Lord Carteret, a man who knew more about European politics than any other Englishman of his time. Meanwhile a very critical situation had developed in Europe; and under Carteret's direction Britain was once more plunged into a European conflict, which obliterated the colonial issue.

The Austrian Succession.—In 1740 the Emperor Charles VI died.† He was the last of the Habsburgs in the direct male line. He left only a daughter, Maria Theresa. For twenty years before his death he had been striving to secure her succession to the wide dominions of the Habsburg House, collecting the signatures of the European powers to a document known as the Pragmatic Sanction. Almost all the powers had signed at one time or another, with the exception of the Elector of Bavaria, who had a better claim to the inheritance than Maria Theresa, because his wife was the daughter of Charles VI's elder brother and predecessor. ‡ When Charles VI died, the Bavarian claim was at once put forward, and the Elector was

* Anson's *Voyage Round the World* is included in Everyman's Library.
† For the European position, see School Atlas, Plate 17.
‡ See Genealogical Table G, at the end of the volume.

chosen as Emperor. France, seeing a chance of ruining her ancient rival, supported the Bavarian claim to the Habsburg lands. Spain took the same side, hoping to win certain Austrian territories in Italy. And Prussia, to whose throne the ambitious and able young prince later known as Frederick the Great had just succeeded (1740), seized the opportunity of self-aggrandisement, and suddenly invaded the rich Austrian province of Silesia. Attacked on all sides, Maria Theresa was unable to hold her own. She was friendless, when Carteret brought in the power of Britain on her side, gave her large subsidies, took the whole Hanoverian army into British pay, and sent all the available British forces into Europe (1742). He also persuaded Maria Theresa to buy off Frederick of Prussia by ceding Silesia to him. Thus the whole strength of Britain was engaged in a European conflict, and the struggle overseas was forgotten.

British Share in the War.—The British intervention unquestionably saved Maria Theresa. British money enabled her to re-equip her armies, and to drive the French and Bavarians out of Austria. A British and Hanoverian force, led by George II in person, advanced from the north to attack the flank of the French army, and at *Dettingen*, on the Main, in the very heart of Germany, won a gallant if rather futile victory (1743). Yet more important, the British fleet in the Mediterranean ruined the Spanish campaign in Italy by preventing the passage of troops and supplies. A somewhat indecisive naval action off *Toulon* (1744), against the combined fleets of France and Spain, had the effect of penning their fleets into harbour for the remainder of the war, and demonstrated the overwhelming naval superiority of Britain. Even Walpole had not neglected the Navy. The leadership at Toulon had not been all that it might have been. But, after a series of courts-martial, the older commanders were displaced, and younger officers, such as Sir Edward Hawke, were given commands. British naval preponderance was more complete in this war than ever before.

The "Broad-bottomed" Ministry.—Carteret's government had undoubtedly acted with great vigour in Europe, and had changed the whole situation. But in Parliament Pitt and others vehemently denounced the concentration of effort upon the continental war, and the total neglect of the colonies. In 1744 Carteret was driven from office, and the direction of affairs passed into the far more incompetent hands of Henry Pelham and his elder brother the Duke of Newcastle. In theory they set themselves to constitute a

national ministry, representative of all the groups, including even the Tories; and a place was later found for the stormy orator, Pitt, as Paymaster-General. This was a very lucrative office, because Paymasters were accustomed to take a commission on all foreign subsidies, and no doubt it was calculated that this would stop Pitt's mouth; but, though a poor man, he declined to take advantage of his opportunities, and this unprecedented self-denial, while it puzzled the politicians, increased his hold upon the House of Commons and the nation. Nevertheless, as a subordinate member of the Government, Pitt was muzzled. And the new ministry, though it was called the "Broad-bottomed Administration," was as exclusively Whig in its aims and methods as Walpole's government had been, and as blind to the Colonial question. The Pelhams were, in fact, merely borough-jobbers on the grand scale, and their conception of statesmanship was limited to "managing" the House of Commons and maintaining the Balance of Power in Europe.

Louisbourg and Fontenoy.—Until 1744, though French and British troops and ships had met in battle, the French had fought as allies of Bavaria and of Spain, the British as allies of Austria: it was not until 1744 that formal war was begun between them. This immediately brought open conflict in America and in India. The strange struggle which now began in India will be dealt with in a later chapter. In America * the news of the declaration of war had no sooner arrived than the spirited governor of Massachusetts, William Shirley, organised an expedition against the formidable fortress of *Louisbourg* on Cape Breton island, which had been constructed by Vauban, the greatest military engineer of his time. Protected by four ships from the West Indian squadron, 5,000 colonial troops were landed on a rocky coast, to attack the greatest fortress in the New World, with a garrison of 2,500. After a siege of five weeks they forced it to surrender. This was a brilliant success, wholly due to the initiative of the colonists; but no attempt was made to follow it up. Meanwhile British and Dutch troops had undertaken the defence of the Austrian Netherlands against a French invasion; and the bloody battle of *Fontenoy* (May 1745), in which they were defeated, was fought as a part of this campaign. But suddenly the Netherlands campaign was interrupted by the news that a Jacobite insurrection had broken out in Scotland: the troops had to be hurried back to deal with it.

* School Atlas, Plate 50*a*.

2. The Jacobite Rising of 1745

Plans of Invasion.—As soon as open war between France and Britain began, the French Government, realising that a Jacobite rising would be the best distraction, offered to Prince Charles Edward, the gallant son of the Old Pretender, the support of an army of 15,000 men if he would lead an insurrection in Scotland. The army was duly gathered at Dunkirk ; but the watchful British fleet made its sailing impossible, and the army was soon diverted to the Flanders campaign.

Prince Charles Edward.—The Young Pretender resolved to proceed alone. In a little brig, loaded with muskets which he had pledged his credit to obtain, he evaded the British ships, and landed at Moidart in the Western Highlands in August 1745, with only seven followers. Even the gallant Highlanders were slow to join an adventurer who came with such small resources. But Stuarts, Camerons, and Macdonalds came in, and were captivated by the young prince's gallant bearing ; meanwhile the Marquis of Tullibardine, long an exile, raised the clans of Perthshire.*

The Prince in Edinburgh.—England and Scotland were almost denuded of troops ; but 3,000 men were sent north under Sir John Cope to deal with the rebels. Charles evaded Cope, and marched swiftly down to Edinburgh, where there was no force capable of offering resistance. The capital was occupied. Once more a Stewart held a levee for his subjects in the Palace of Holyrood ; and the romance of this adventure carried Edinburgh off its feet. Meanwhile Cope, stranded in the Highlands, took ship from Aberdeen to Dunbar. In the mist of a September morning the Highlanders burst upon Cope's army at *Prestonpans*, and his men were scattered in a wild panic. †

The Advance to Derby.—The news of Prestonpans and the loss of Edinburgh came like a bolt from the blue to the English Government. They had no troops ready ; the militia could never resist a Highland charge. The army was hurried back from Flanders ; but if Charles could have swept southwards through England as rapidly as he had marched from Moidart to Edinburgh,

* There is a good description of the '45 in Scott's *Waverley ;* and Stevenson's *Master of Ballantrae* gives a sidelight upon it.

† For the campaign and the route of the Young Pretender, see School Atlas, Plate 39*a*.

he might have taken London by surprise. But he was delayed for five weeks. By the time his march to England had started, an army of veterans was back from the Continent, and his chance had gone. Nevertheless, he got as far as *Derby* by the beginning of December; and the news caused a panic in the Bank of England. He had hoped to be joined by the Jacobites of Northern England, but his recruits

FIG. 25.—The Jacobite Rising in Scotland

were numbered by tens instead of by thousands, and his Highlanders, unhappy so far from home, were melting away.

Culloden.—It was necessary to retreat; and hard on the heels of the dispirited army came the Duke of Cumberland with the army from Flanders. Charles turned at *Falkirk* (January 1746), and struck a smart blow at the enemy's vanguard. But his cause was manifestly lost. His army steadily dwindled. His council of war was made wretched with mutual reproaches. At length, in April 1746, the agony came to an end on *Culloden Moor*, near Inverness, where the Highlanders flung themselves in vain upon the serried

bayonets of veteran troops. Dire vengeance followed this final defeat of the Stewart cause. The slaughter which followed the battle was so cruel that it gained for Cumberland the name of the Butcher of Culloden. The glens of the clans were pitilessly harried, and every homestead burnt. A price of £30,000 was put upon the head of the defeated prince : but among all the impoverished Highlanders there was found not one who was mean enough to claim it, and after many perilous adventures, the Young Chevalier made his way back to France, leaving behind him a memory more fragrant than that of any of his ancestors. Once at least, and perhaps more often, Charles Edward paid secret visits to England in later years. But there was no more hope of any rising : during all the long years until he died in 1788, a wreck of his old self, he lived on the memory of those days of romance when he was a lad of twenty-five.

The Taming of the Highlands.—The long, tragic tale of the Stewarts was at an end. The old, wild life of the Highlands was at an end also. For after this rising, the Government set itself to remove all further danger by a series of repressive laws. The jurisdiction of the chiefs was abolished.* The wearing of the kilt and the playing of the bagpipes were made penal offences, and the possession of arms made the Highlander liable to heavy punishment. Presently the imagination of Pitt found a happier way of treating the valiant clansmen : he raised regiments among them for the war in America, and the pipes were heard again, leading the charge against the abattis of Ticonderoga.

3. The Peace of Aix la Chapelle

End of the War.—The rising of 1745, by necessitating the withdrawal of British troops, had meanwhile given the French great advantages in the Netherlands. But elsewhere they had suffered serious reverses ; and their mercantile marine had been almost swept from the seas. Even more than the British, they had lost by being diverted into a purely European war. Nevertheless, the war dragged on for another two years, and the Duke of Cumberland was again defeated at *Laffeldt* (1747).

The Terms of Peace.—In 1748 a peace of sheer weariness was concluded at Aix la Chapelle. It left Maria Theresa mistress

* For all this, see Stevenson's *Kidnapped*, which deals with the period after the '45. Stevenson also has a ballad on Ticonderoga.

of all the Habsburg lands, save some territories in Italy which went to Spain, and the duchy of Silesia,* which she had to concede reluctantly to the treacherous Frederick of Prussia. But the rivalry of Austria and Prussia for the leadership of Germany, which was to last until 1866, had begun ; and ere long Maria Theresa was to make a bid for revenge. As for Britain, France, and Spain, having forgotten the real causes of quarrel between them, they also reached no decision. There was a mutual restoration of conquests ; and the New Englanders saw, with exasperation, their conquest of Louisbourg handed back to France, as the price of Madras, in distant India, which the French had conquered from the East India Company. Here was no settlement ; and the eight years which passed before the next war broke out were in fact filled with irregular warfare, in the East and in the West, a preamble to the decisive conflict which had been merely postponed.

4. The Wesleys and Religious Revival

While public men were engrossed with the resultless fighting in Europe and the intrigues of politicians, a great thing was happening in England, infinitely more important than either. A religious revival had begun. Its influence, affecting gradually all the Churches, gave birth in the second half of the century to a humanitarian movement which deeply affected British policy, and to a missionary movement which permanently modified the character of the British Empire.

Revival in Wales.—This revival started, concurrently and independently, in Wales and in England. The Welsh movement, which began in 1735, was limited to the Welsh-speaking area, and therefore attracted little attention elsewhere. It was accompanied by an educational and a literary revival, and it marked the beginning of a new life in Wales. Modern Welsh nationalism took its rise in this movement.

The Wesleys.—The English revival was primarily due to the work of John and Charles Wesley,† two Oxford scholars of distinction. While still at Oxford, in 1729, they had formed a small religious

* For Austrian and Prussian territories, see School Atlas, Plates 19*a*, 19*b*.

† There is a short Life of John Wesley by W. H. Hutton. Q's story, *Hetty Wesley*, gives a picture of his family background.

society known by scoffers as "the Methodists." The Wesleys were the sons of a Lincolnshire parson. Puritanism was in their blood: both of their grandfathers had been among the Puritan divines ejected on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1662. In 1735, attracted by Oglethorpe's philanthropic schemes, they went to the new colony of Georgia, where they laboured for three years. Returning in 1738, they found that their old Oxford friend, George Whitefield, had struck out a fruitful line of work, preaching to the degraded and neglected colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol. He had exercised a remarkable influence upon the lives of his hearers. The Kingswood colliers were typical of great masses of the working folk of England, in town and country, to whom the Church of that time had nothing to offer. In 1739 John Wesley took up Whitefield's work, and began preaching in the highways and hedges; his brother joined in the task, and other recruits were presently added.

The Wesleyan Apostolate.—Without intermission John Wesley went on with this work for over fifty years, until his death in 1791, and his colleagues were as active. They travelled over all the roads of Britain, and John Wesley alone covered an average of five thousand miles a year. It was his practice to preach twenty times a week, beginning at five in the morning. Most of this work was done in the open air—in the market-places of towns, in the yards of gaols, on bare hillsides in the country. This was the first attempt at public propaganda of this kind, the first appeal to the mass of common folk, since Wycliffe sent out his Poor Priests. The manifest sincerity of these devoted evangelists, their fearlessness, the moving power of their eloquence, had the most profound effect. Vast crowds gathered to hear them, often in mere curiosity: they seldom went away unmoved. Even cynical worldlings like Lord Chesterfield and Horace Walpole were carried away by their eloquence. There can have been very few of the inhabitants of Britain who were not, at one time or another, brought under the influence of these impassioned preachers during their long apostolate. This stirring of the stagnant waters was an event of immense importance.

Wesley and the Church.—No hostility to the Church was intended by these activities. They resembled the work of the Friars of the thirteenth century, who had also set themselves to carry the message of religion to the outcast and the degraded. If the English Church of the eighteenth century had been as wise as the Latin Church of the thirteenth century, it would have found a place

for the work of the Wesleys. Nothing more clearly demonstrates the deadness of the religious life of that age than the fact that the Wesleys and Whitefield were treated as dangerous fanatics and "enthusiasts," refused admission to churches, and finally driven to organise separate Churches of their own. It was, of course, impossible that John Wesley (who had a genius for organisation) should leave the flocks whom he had stirred to a new life without shepherds. At first he was content to organise them in "societies" for mutual edification over and above the formal weekly services of the Church. But as time went on, more than this was found to be necessary; and towards the end of his life he began to ordain ministers to tend the chapels which his followers had long been erecting as centres for the "enthusiasm" which the Church would not countenance.*

The Evangelical Revival.—The influence of the Wesleyan movement was by no means limited to the new Societies of Methodists. It stirred a fresh life in all the dissenting Churches. It gave birth to the Evangelical movement in the Church of England which was, from the 'sixties onwards, the most vital element in its life. It helped to bring about co-operation between Churchmen and Dissenters in the philanthropic activities which distinguished the second half of the century. By a significant coincidence, the year 1739, in which Wesley began preaching in the open air, was the year in which the Spanish war began; and while these unwearied apostles were tramping all the roads of England and America, the long struggle for maritime and colonial supremacy was spreading its range over the world. The British peoples, in more than one way, were being shaken out of the torpor into which they had fallen.

5. The Brewing of a New War (1748–1755)

The Great Issues.—The Treaty of Aix la Chapelle brought no settlement of the great issues that had arisen, either in Europe or in the non-European world; and during the next eight years these questions were all becoming more acute, so that in 1756 fierce warfare simultaneously broke out in Europe, in America, in India, in the West Indies, in West Africa, and on the seas. This was to be the first of a series of world-wide wars brought about by the

* There is a little book on Methodism, by H. B. Workman, in the Cambridge Manuals.

ambitions of the European States, culminating in the Great War of 1914–1918. But there were very few, in England or in Europe, who appreciated the importance of the struggle that was looming ahead. Like men walking in their sleep, the politicians moved towards a crisis which they did not foresee.

In India.—It was the development of a fierce rivalry between France and England in America and India that was of deepest concern to the British peoples. In India, during these years, the French, led by the genius of Dupleix, were opening new paths of ambition which threatened ruin to their English rivals ; but the history of the struggle in India will be dealt with as a single whole in a later chapter. Meanwhile in America the clash between English and French was becoming yearly more marked.

The French in America.—Since the Treaty of Utrecht the French had been very active in America. They had a series of forts, mission stations and trading posts which controlled the Great Lakes, and held the line of the Illinois and the Mississippi.* A glance at the map will show that in the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi they controlled the two great waterways which led into the heart of North America. Masters of the great central plain, they would have penned the British colonies into a narrow coastal strip, backed by the trackless wooded hills of the Alleghany range, through which Virginian traders were only beginning to find their way. They thus held the upper hand ; and though their settlers were outnumbered by ten to one by the British settlers, they were all under a single unified control, while the British were divided into thirteen disunited colonies, with no machinery for common action.

The Struggle in Acadia.—The weakness of the French position was that the British, holding Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, commanded the entrance to the St. Lawrence. To guard this point the French in 1749 refortified the fortress of Louisbourg, restored in 1748 ; while the British found it necessary to fix a large garrison at Halifax in Nova Scotia. But apart from this garrison, the whole population of Nova Scotia was French. During these years the French Government used every possible means to stir up the hostility of the French settlers in Nova Scotia against their English masters, and even offered a reward to the Red Indians for every English scalp brought in. They also occupied all the territory

* School Atlas, Plate 50*a*.

beyond the isthmus (modern New Brunswick), though this region had always been regarded as part of "Acadia," ceded in 1712. The situation in Nova Scotia was so dangerous that in 1755 the British authorities decided upon the deportation of the whole French population, who were removed to the southern British colonies.* This was a cruel act, though it might seem to be justified by military necessity.

The Struggle in the Ohio Valley.—Meanwhile the French had made an important forward move in another direction. In 1749 they decided to occupy the Ohio valley, immediately behind the British territories. British traders were expelled. Thereupon the governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie, sent a small force under a young Virginian squire, George Washington, to warn off the French, and a little woodland fort was erected at the junction of the rivers Monongahela and Allegheny, where Pittsburg now stands (1753). The French, however, had made a road through the forests from Lake Erie to the disputed region ; and by this route a force advanced, which drove out the modest garrison from the fort.

The Conference of Albany.—A war for the possession of the Ohio valley was obviously beginning. To deal with this crisis, a conference of the thirteen colonies was held at *Albany* (1754), when it was proposed that a federal organisation should be set up, with power to organise the colonies for common defence. The moving spirit in this proposal was Benjamin Franklin. It would have been welcomed by the home government. But the colonies were too jealous of their independence to agree. They preferred to leave the whole responsibility to the home government.

French Aggressions.—While the Conference was sitting, Washington † had been sent with 400 men to regain the fort. He was attacked by much superior numbers, and forced to surrender ; and the French rebuilt and fortified the fort, calling it Fort Duquesne (1754). They had won the mastery of the Ohio valley at the moment when the colonists were refusing to take common action. In the same year the French made another formidable move. They fortified the fortress of Ticonderoga, on Lake Champlain, commanding the great water-route ‡ from the St. Lawrence to the Hudson, and threatening the very heart of the English settlements.

* This is the episode described in Longfellow's *Evangeline*.

† Of the many Lives of Washington, the short one by H. C. Lodge may be named.

‡ School Atlas, Plate 50*b*.

Armies on Foot.—Meanwhile the home authorities, in both countries, were realising the importance of the crisis. In 1755 the English Government sent out General Edward Braddock with two regiments of regulars to stiffen the colonial resistance. In the same year the French Government sent 3,000 men, with instructions to attack the British settlements by way of Lake Champlain and the River Hudson—a great navigable water-way which cut through the centre of the British settlements. Without any declaration of war, a struggle for supremacy in America had definitely opened in 1755.

The Diplomatic Revolution.—While war between France and England was becoming inevitable in America and India, the situation in Europe also was undergoing an ominous change. Maria Theresa of Austria could not forgive Frederick of Prussia for his treacherous seizure of Silesia in the last war. She was determined upon a war of revenge. Her old ally, Britain, would not help her, because Prussia was the next neighbour of Hanover, which would thus be exposed to attack. She turned towards her ancient enemy, France. France had no reason for going to war with Prussia : she ought to have avoided European complications in view of the coming struggle overseas ; but the king's mistress, Madame de Pompadour, hated Frederick of Prussia, and such things count in the policy of despotic courts. France, therefore, allowed herself (1756) to become the cat's-paw of Austria. Russia and Sweden were also drawn into the confederacy, and it seemed that Prussia, surrounded by a ring of enemies, must be ruined. What was to be the attitude of Britain in this strange regrouping of European alliances ? The supreme concern of the Duke of Newcastle, now in control of British policy, was for the safety of Hanover. Open war with France began early in 1756, and Hanover lay open to attack from France on the West. In order to secure the Electorate on the east, Newcastle concluded with Frederick of Prussia the *Convention of Westminster* (1756), whereby Britain and Prussia mutually guaranteed each other's possessions. Once more, it appeared, Britain was to be dragged into a European war, in which she had no concern, as the sole ally of a power that was threatened on all sides. Once more her oversea interests were in danger of being sacrificed for the supposed interests of Hanover.

Pitt in Opposition.—These arrangements aroused the thunder of Pitt's eloquence in the British Parliament. He was now unmuzzled, for in 1754 Henry Pelham had died ; the ministry had

been reconstructed under his flustered and incompetent brother, the Duke of Newcastle; and Pitt had found that he was still to be excluded from any share of real power. He went into violent opposition. During the years following 1754 his denunciations of the Government were arousing the attention of the country. Though Parliament was not reported, the echoes of his fervid eloquence were heard throughout the land, and he became the standard-bearer of a rising indignation against the Whig oligarchy and its conceptions of national policy.

Character of Pitt.—William Pitt* was, in 1754, forty-six years old. He had spent twenty years in Parliament, and was already famous as the most commanding orator whom the House of Commons had ever known. He was a man who compelled attention. Tall and spare, with the eye of a hawk, he dominated the House as no man has ever done. Yet because he did not belong to one of the great families, and had no "borough influence," he had never been given a chance of showing what was in him. He shared Bolingbroke's contempt for the Whigs and their methods, and would have been glad to lend a hand in the overthrow of their corrupt oligarchy. He was an austere and lonely figure; he did not work easily with other men; and he cultivated an Olympian manner, and invited ridicule by his theatrical poses. But it was not safe to laugh at Pitt. He was no mere *poseur*, but a man of immense courage, with an ardent belief in the destiny of his country, and in his own power to lead it to triumphs such as it had never known. He was not a logical thinker, and was often inconsistent. But he believed passionately in England and in liberty. The two causes were identified in his mind. He wanted to see the English system of liberty triumphant over the French system of absolutism. He believed that the destiny of England lay on the seas and beyond them. This had been his theme for twenty years. It had led him to denounce Walpole's fear of facing the issue with Spain, and the half-heartedness of Walpole's conduct of the war when it came. It had led him to denounce Carteret for involving England in European war, instead of concentrating upon the struggle overseas. Now, when the great duel with France for supremacy in America was manifestly beginning, the same beliefs raised Pitt's eloquence to an unprecedented fervour

* There is a good short Life of Pitt by Frederic Harrison (Twelve English Statesmen), and a fuller one by W. F. Reddaway (Heroes of the Nations).

as he denounced the Duke of Newcastle, first for his blindness to the real issues, and then for the incredible incompetence with which he handled the war.

Thus during the years 1748–1755 everything was shaping for an epical conflict. War was raging in India and in the backwoods of America. A huge conflagration was preparing in Europe. And in England the greatest leader of men since Cromwell had come into the forefront and was laying before the nation a new conception of its policy. "England has been long in labour," said Frederick of Prussia in 1756, "but at last she has produced a Man."

CHAPTER XXXI

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NAVAL AND COLONIAL SUPREMACY (1755–1763)

1. Years of Disaster (1755–1757)

The "Seven Years' War."—The great and decisive conflict which now began is known in Europe as the Seven Years' War, dating from the invasion of Saxony by Frederick of Prussia in the summer of 1756. But open war between France and England had formally begun some months earlier; the real beginning of the conflict in America dates back to 1755, when regular forces of French and English met in the Ohio valley; the first shots had been fired in 1754, when Washington attacked Fort Duquesne. For Britain and France, therefore, it was not a "Seven" but an "Eight" or a "Nine" Years' War.

The Disasters of 1755.—For the first three years there was nothing but a record of disasters. In 1755 General Edward Braddock, a competent soldier wholly unused to backwoods warfare, set out to recapture Fort Duquesne. He had expected the support of the colonists; but he had the greatest difficulty in raising a few irregular troops, and even in getting the requisite wagons. In the trackless woods he was ambushed by a force of Indians and Canadians; his regulars knew not how to deal with their invisible foes; they were shot down as they stood; Braddock himself was killed; and only a remnant of the force could be extricated by young Washington.

Meanwhile, in the North, the French had begun to advance southwards from Ticonderoga. It was only with difficulty that New England levies held the forts at the bottom of Lake George, which commanded the entrance to the Hudson valley.* Next year these might be forced, and the line of the Hudson would be lost. Most of the Red Indian tribes were in alliance with the French. During the winter the long unguarded western frontier of the colonies was terrorised by frequent raids. There was no army to protect the frontier. The colonists (except in New England) would do nothing, waiting for the mother-country to protect them.

Loss of Minorca.—Worse news soon followed. In April a French fleet and army suddenly attacked Minorca, taking it entirely by surprise. A British fleet under Admiral Byng came to its relief. Byng fought an indecisive battle, and (being somewhat outnumbered) drew off to Gibraltar, and left Minorca to surrender. There was an outcry in England. Byng was recalled, court-martialled, and sentenced to death. Popular clamour demanded his immediate execution *pour encourager les autres.* Pitt lost some of his popularity because he resisted this unjust sentence, which was carried out.

The Danger in America.—To America the French had sent out a very able soldier, Montcalm, who could dispose of 7,000 troops. The Duke of Newcastle sent out 900 men, under an old-fashioned general, Lord Loudoun ; and although the colonists were now, in alarm, recruiting in larger numbers, they were untrained and outnumbered. The fighting on Lake George was still indecisive ; but the outlook seemed almost hopeless. Meanwhile the war had begun in Europe. Britain's only ally, Frederick of Prussia, had seized Saxony ; but the armies of Austria, Russia, Sweden, and France were making ready to attack him. It seemed certain that he would be overwhelmed. He could not possibly help to defend Hanover.

Pitt's First Ministry.—These disasters brought about the fall of the Duke of Newcastle. Pitt, with the Duke of Devonshire, formed a ministry. But they had no majority in Parliament, which was still controlled by Newcastle. Moreover, the king had no confidence in a minister who had denounced the subordination of English interests to Hanover. Pitt promptly began to make great plans. Large reinforcements were to be sent to America. All the French ports were to be blockaded by the Navy to prevent the dispatch

* School Atlas, Plate 50*b*.

of troops across the Atlantic. Raids were to be made on the French coast. Adequate forces were to be maintained in Hanover to keep the French employed. Highland regiments were raised. A Militia Act was passed to provide for home defence and release all available troops for foreign service. In a very short time Pitt's energy promised to transform the situation. But he was not allowed a free hand. The Duke of Cumberland, who was to take command in Hanover, refused to serve under this anti-Hanoverian. In April 1757, Pitt was dismissed, and for eleven weeks, at a critical moment, there was no Government.

The Coalition of Pitt and Newcastle. — Petitions and addresses poured in demanding Pitt's return to power; nineteen towns voted him the freedom, and "it rained gold boxes," as Horace Walpole put it. Eventually, in June, an agreement was made whereby Pitt and Newcastle formed a junction—Newcastle taking charge of the "management" of Parliament, which was what he cared about, while Pitt directed the war. There was no real confidence between these mutually disdainful colleagues. But this did not matter. Pitt assumed the powers of a dictator; and on all questions affecting the war his colleagues trembled and obeyed—storing their resentment for a more convenient season. Pitt's dictatorship lasted for four years. They were the most glorious four years in British history.

The Failures of 1757.—The campaign of 1757 was still unsuccessful; for Pitt's plans had not had time to mature, nor had he yet found the right instruments. In America * Loudoun, with his enlarged army, went to Halifax, meaning to attack Louisbourg, but thought better of it, and returned having achieved nothing; while the French under Montcalm mastered the forts below Lake George, and would have advanced down the Hudson but for Loudoun's return. On the Continent of Europe Frederick of Prussia met a severe defeat in Bohemia, while his enemies were closing in upon him on every side. † Worst of all, a French army invaded Hanover, inflicted a severe defeat on Cumberland at *Hastenbeck*, and forced him to sign a humiliating convention at Klosterzeven, whereby his army was to be disbanded. To cap all this bad news came the tidings that an expedition against *Rochefort*, on the French coast,

* For the American campaign, School Atlas 50*a* and *b*.

† For the Prussian campaigns, see the larger Atlas, Plate 67*a*.

which Pitt had planned, had ignominiously failed, because the general in command had refused to attack. Everywhere the generals of the old school were proving their incompetence. Pitt learnt his lesson ; in future he would pick his own men, without regard to seniority.

A Black Outlook.—At the end of 1757, after three years of fighting, the outlook was black indeed. Not only in America and in Europe but in distant India everything had gone wrong. The news of the loss of Calcutta and of the Black Hole,* though these events had happened in 1756, only reached England in June, 1757. Even Pitt was disheartened. Utter ruin seemed to face the nation. "We are undone at home and abroad," said Lord Chesterfield. "We are no longer a nation. I never yet saw so dreadful a prospect." But the gloom of 1757 was only the background for the intoxicating successes of the next two years. The contrast is the measure of Pitt's greatness.

The Turn of the Tide.—The tide was soon to turn. Even during the winter good news began to come in. Frederick of Prussia won two dazzling victories, over the French at *Rossbach*, over the Austrians at *Leuthen :* he became a popular hero in England, and public houses took "The King of Prussia" in his blue uniform for their sign. Then came the incredible news of Clive's victory at *Plassey*, of which there will be more to say elsewhere. These successes were not organised in England. But they prepared the way for the amazing change of fortune which began in the next year.

2. The Years of Triumph (1758–1760)

Pitt's Plans.—During the last years of disaster Pitt had been organising for victory. He had discarded all the old-fashioned generals, and selected young men of the right spirit—Wolfe, Amherst, Howe, Granby. He had persuaded the American colonies to raise numerous forces by undertaking to pay the whole cost of their equipment. He had raised his Highland regiments, and embodied the militia in England. He had repudiated the Convention of Klosterzeven, and sent out a new army to defend Hanover, under an able German general, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. But above all, he had conceived a great plan of campaign, in which all the parts

* See below, p. 433.

were related to one another; and this was the greatest of his achievements.

The Role of the Navy.—The foundation of all was the strength of the Navy. It was employed mainly in the tedious work of blockading all the French naval ports, so as to prevent the sending of any French reinforcements across the Atlantic. But command of the sea was also used as a means of alarming the French by frequent descents upon their coast, which compelled them to keep large forces at home. And other naval forces were employed in more distant attacks. Meanwhile the main French army was to be kept occupied in Germany. Pitt was often criticised for his inconsistency in carrying on German campaigns. But his answer was complete. His German campaigns were not an end in themselves, but a means to an end—"I will conquer America in Germany." The main struggle was in and for America, but it might not have been so triumphant if the navy had not kept up its blockade, and if coastal raids and the German campaign had not diverted the main strength of France.

The War in Europe.—The blockade of the French ports was strictly maintained throughout 1758. There were no less than five descents on the French coast, in one of which Cherbourg was occupied and its shipping and forts destroyed. There was a brilliant little campaign in West Africa,* where the main French stations of Senegal and Goree were captured. Finally, in Germany a mixed army of British troops and German mercenaries brilliantly outmanœuvred two French armies, defeated one of them at *Crefeld*, and cleared them out of Hanover.

The Campaign in America.—But the main campaign was in America. Here Pitt had designed a quadruple attack upon the French. The main attack, by a fleet under Boscawen and an army under Amherst and Wolfe, was directed against *Louisbourg:* the fortress with 4,000 soldiers was captured, and 13 French ships in the harbour were destroyed. The second force, under Abercrombie and Howe, directed against the French forts on Lake Champlain, was beaten back at *Ticonderoga*, where the new Highland regiments were decimated in a frontal onslaught upon a strongly defended position. The third force, under a colonial officer, Bradstreet, advanced to Lake Ontario up the Mohawk valley, and captured

* School Atlas, Plate 56*c*.

Forts Oswego and Frontenac, thus cutting the link between Canada and the Ohio valley. The fourth force, under a gallant old soldier, Forbes, cut a road through the woods to Fort Duquesne, and occupied that much-contested post, renaming it Pittsburg in honour of the great minister. Apart from the failure at Ticonderoga, this was a good year's work ; and it prepared the way for a final onslaught on French Canada in the following campaign.

Naval Victories.—Good as was the record of 1758, that of 1759 was yet more brilliant. It opened with a menace of invasion. A French army of 50,000 was prepared in the Channel ports ; another force of 36,000 French, Russians, and Swedes was to invade Scotland under the protection of a Swedish fleet. Like Parma in 1588, and like Napoleon in 1804, the vigorous French minister Choiseul had prepared a huge fleet of flat-bottomed boats to carry over the troops ; their transfer was to be covered by a massing of French fleets in the Channel. In England preparations were made for the invasion, as in 1588 and 1804, by calling out the militia and raising regiments of volunteers. There was a great outburst of patriotic zeal. But it was never put to the test. The navy was more than equal to its task. When the French Mediterranean fleet sallied out from Toulon to make a junction with the Channel fleet, it was caught by Boscawen in the Straits of Gibraltar, pursued to *Lagos* * on the Portuguese coast, and there all but completely destroyed (August 1759). Later the main French fleet came out from Brest, taking advantage of a gale which had driven off the blockading squadron. It was caught by Hawke with the English Channel fleet, pursued into *Quiberon Bay* despite its dangerous reefs, and annihilated in a brilliant battle fought in a gale that blew on to a dangerous lee shore (November). Lagos and Quiberon Bay between them not only destroyed all possibility of a French invasion, they made British naval supremacy unchallengeable, they swept French commerce from the seas, and they made it impossible for France to send reinforcements to Canada. They also made it easy to attack the French West Indies, where the rich sugar island of *Guadeloupe* was captured in this year.

Victory in Germany.—Meanwhile on the Continent, though Frederick of Prussia was very hard-pressed, the British forces in Hanover won a dazzling victory at *Minden* which humiliated the

* For the naval battles, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28.

French army and made Hanover safe. It was a mixed force which fought this battle ; but the brunt of the fighting fell upon six British regiments, which still carry the name of Minden on their colours. The victory would have been yet more complete but that Lord George Sackville, disobeying orders, failed to follow up the pursuit.

The Conquest of Canada.—But once again, the main campaign was in North America. While Prideaux captured Fort Niagara, Amherst advanced up Lake Champlain, where he found that the main French forces had been withdrawn to concentrate upon the defence of Quebec. It was his duty to hasten, so as to co-operate in the culminating attack on *Quebec*. But he was needlessly deliberate ; with the result that Wolfe * (who, with the support of a fleet under Sanders, had been given the job of attacking Quebec

FIG. 26.—Quebec.

from the east) found himself faced by an almost impossible task. Wolfe had 9,000 troops. But Quebec, reputed to be impregnable, and elaborately fortified, was defended by 15,000 troops under Montcalm. Montcalm's army lay behind entrenchments to the east of the city : to the west a line of cliffs two hundred feet high seemed to make an attack impossible. Wolfe tried an attack on Montcalm's lines ; it was beaten off. Amherst did not arrive. September had come, and the campaigning season was nearly over. As a last desperate chance, Wolfe took 5,000 men by night, in boats with muffled oars, to a point at the foot of the Heights of Abraham, west of the city. An advance guard crept up a steep path and overpowered the surprised sentinels ; the rest of the little army followed, dragging with them two guns ; and by dawn were drawn up on the

* There is a good short Life of Wolfe by A. G. Bradley (English Men of Action).

high plateau. Montcalm, hurrying up with his army, ordered a charge that should sweep them off the plateau. The British troops lay still until the enemy were within forty paces ; then three withering volleys and a wild charge settled the fate of the French empire in America. Montcalm and Wolfe both lay dead upon the field.

Garnering Conquests.—This was the crowning achievement of a year of victories such as Britain had never known in her history : "It is necessary," wrote Horace Walpole, "to ask every morning what victory there is, for fear of missing one." The years 1760 and 1761 were spent in garnering the results of 1759. In Canada there was still hard fighting, and Wolfe's small army was for a time besieged by French forces in Quebec. But before the end of 1760 the French army—having (thanks to the navy) no hope of any succour from the mother country—was forced to surrender at Montreal, and the whole of Canada submitted. In the same year the last resistance of the French in India was overpowered at Wandewash. But on the Continent Frederick of Prussia was almost exhausted ; Austria and France were also weary of war ; and the time seemed to have come for making peace.

Projects of Peace.—Pitt was very ready to make peace ; this, indeed, was why he had not shown his accustomed energy in pressing on the war during 1760 and 1761. He was ready for peace on two conditions—that Britain should reap the reward of her victories, and that Prussia should not be left in the lurch. But in the meanwhile the situation had changed in English politics. George II died in October 1760. His grandson and successor, George III, had conceived the ambition of overthrowing the Whig oligarchy and restoring the royal authority. For this purpose he was eager to end the war. Many members of the Cabinet were equally eager : some because they wanted to get rid of the dictator, others because they were frightened by the magnitude of the British victory and feared a European coalition, others again because they were terrified by the dimensions of the debt. Pitt found that his power was weakening.

The Fall of Pitt.—Meanwhile France had concluded a secret treaty with Spain—the *Third Family Compact*, August 1761—whereby Spain undertook to declare war on Britain unless peace was promptly made. The Bourbon powers were in fact making up their minds that the British naval and colonial supremacy must be challenged before it was too late. Pitt did not know of this treaty, but he suspected it, because of a sudden change of tone on the part of the

French, who demanded that peace must be made without Prussia, and that certain concessions must be made to Spain. He broke off the negotiations, and urged that war should at once be declared on Spain. The Cabinet refused, and Pitt resigned (October 1761). Three months later war with Spain was declared (January 1762).

The War with Spain.—Though Pitt was gone, he had made his plans for the expected war, and chosen the men who were to carry them out. The campaign of 1762 was therefore only less brilliant than that of 1759. All the French West Indian islands were seized. *Havana*, the capital of Cuba, was captured by a fleet and an army, together with twelve Spanish warships. When Spain invaded Portugal, a British army was landed from the sea, and drove the Spanish troops over the border. And an expedition despatched from India seized *Manila*, and compelled the surrender of the whole of the Philippine Islands and the payment of a heavy ransom. It appeared that the Spanish Empire was about to go the same way as the French, before the irresistible power of the British Navy.

3. The Peace of Paris

The campaign of 1762 convinced both France and Spain that there was nothing to be got by continuing the war. They resolved to make peace, and build up their naval power in preparation for another challenge when an opportunity should come: it came after fourteen years. And as the British Government was bent on peace, the terms were quickly settled, before the end of 1762, and ratified early in 1763.

Desertion of Prussia.—The treaty made no provision for Frederick of Prussia—a desertion which aroused Pitt's indignation, and which Frederick never forgave. But for the accident which in 1762 brought his admirer, Peter III, to the Russian throne, and swung the strength of Russia over to his side, he would have been ruined. As it was, he was able to make peace a little later at Hubertsburg without suffering any loss: his success in resisting half Europe brought Prussia into the first rank of powers.

British Gains.—To the British peoples the Treaty of Paris* brought an amazing triumph. France ceded to Britain all Canada except the two small islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, and all the

* School Atlas, Plate 44.

territory east of the Mississippi ; Spain ceded Florida in exchange for Havana ; while France handed over to Spain Louisiana and her vague claims to the lands west of the Mississippi. In effect, the control of the North American Continent passed into British hands. In the West Indies * France regained Martinique and Guadeloupe, but the other French islands became British ; while Minorca, the emblem of supremacy in the Mediterranean, was restored to Britain. In India France obtained her two trading-stations of Pondicherry and Chandernagore, but only as trading-stations : political supremacy remained British. In the East, as in the West, the British power was now supreme.

This treaty was much criticised, by Pitt among others, on the ground that it gave to Britain less than she might have claimed. She might, indeed, at that moment have claimed almost any territories in the oversea dominions of France and Spain that she cared to possess. But her moderation was wise. She had, in fact, already acquired more than she was yet able to administer successfully ; and she had scarcely yet begun to realise how difficult were the responsibilities which these conquests imposed upon her. Both in India and in America she was to find herself involved, during the next twenty years, in all but insoluble problems.

CHAPTER XXXII

GEORGE III AND THE QUARREL WITH THE AMERICAN COLONIES (1760–1775)

1. The Aims of George III

New Problems.—The uneventful apathy of the Whig period had come to an end. The long reign of George III, which began during the War, was to be fuller of great events and great issues than any earlier period of British history. Britain had suddenly become the greatest Power in the world, and was faced by new and bewildering problems. A vast new empire had been acquired in America : part of it was peopled by French Catholics, strange to the British system ;

* School Atlas, Plate 48*c*.

another part consisted of a huge wilderness inhabited by wandering tribes of savages. How were these new dominions to be governed? The thirteen colonies were growing up, and the old colonial system, under which they had lived since 1660, was manifestly working badly. How could it be adjusted? In India a new empire of an unprecedented kind had been won. What was to be done with it? In Ireland a movement of protest against the repressive system established since the Revolution was astir. In England the great social change known as the Industrial Revolution was about to begin, and a religious and philanthropic revival was afoot. All these great questions combined to make the new period one of immense difficulty and interest. But, for the moment, they were all obscured by a political problem. The new king had come to the throne with the set intention of overthrowing the Whig oligarchy, and restoring to the Crown the powers designed for it in the Revolution Settlement. All the other problems were affected by this. Parliament and the politicians could not give their minds to the greater questions of imperial policy, because they were engrossed by the struggle between the king and the Whigs.

Character of George III.—George III * had one great advantage over his predecessors: he had been born and bred in England, and was thoroughly English in sentiment. He was a young man of moderate ability, with a firm will, real courage, and a high sense of public obligation and of his own rights and duties as king. He had spent much of his youth in seclusion. His tutor and friend, the Marquis of Bute, was a Scottish Tory and a warm admirer of Pitt. Like Pitt, the tutor and his pupil were much influenced by the ideas of Bolingbroke, which had been in vogue at the court of George's father, Frederick Prince of Wales. George cast himself for the part of Bolingbroke's "Patriot King." He was determined to overthrow the corrupt Whig oligarchy which had so long usurped all the powers of the Crown, and to resume the function of choosing his own ministers and directing their policy, which the Crown had always enjoyed until 1714. He had no intention of overturning the constitution; he did not even try to reverse the usage of the last two reigns whereby the king did not attend the meetings of his Cabinet. But he meant to reclaim for the Crown the powers which the Revolution Settlement had left to it.

* Read Thackeray's study of George III in *The Four Georges*.

Fall of the Whigs.—It was a sign of this intention when, at the beginning of his reign, he required that Lord Bute should be admitted to the Cabinet; Cabinet ministers had since 1714 generally been selected by the Whig leader for the time being. It was another sign of his intention that, at the first general election after his accession, he insisted upon being consulted as to the management of the election. He also took into his own hands all the royal patronage, the control of which had been the foundation of Whig power. The Duke of Newcastle, who had been accustomed, like his Whig predecessors, to manage elections and to control the votes of the army of "placemen" in the House of Commons, found that his power had simply melted away. Pitt, who shared the king's ideas, would have been his natural ally. Unfortunately they took different views about the peace. After Pitt's resignation in 1761, the great man sulked, and it was five years before George obtained his help, though he made several attempts to get it in the meanwhile. In 1762 the Duke of Newcastle was dismissed. Thereafter he was a nonentity—so easily did the power of the Whigs collapse once they had lost the control of royal patronage. If all the Whig borough-owners had combined, indeed, they would still have been formidable. But they were split up into cliques, which could be played off one against the other.

Ministry of Bute.—It was thus very easy to destroy the power of the Whigs. But it was more difficult to get a ministry after George's own heart, for ministers, once appointed, were apt to insist upon having their own way. At first George tried to govern through his friend Bute, and it was Bute who negotiated the Peace of Paris. But Bute was not a skilful politician. He did not know how to manage the cliques. He was exposed to a vile and venomous press campaign, which sneered at him for being a Scot, and made unpardonable insinuations about his relations with the king's mother. The worst offender in this campaign was a bankrupt libertine named John Wilkes, against whom George III not unnaturally vowed vengeance. As soon as the Peace of Paris was safely concluded, Bute threw up politics in disgust, and retired into private life (1763).

2. Grenville, Wilkes, and the Stamp Act (1763–1765)

The Grenville Ministry.—George now had to find another ministry. After trying in vain to get Pitt, he chose George Grenville, perhaps because he was Pitt's brother-in-law; and later the Duke of

Bedford, who was the head of one of the strongest of the Whig cliques (known as the "Bloomsbury Gang"), joined the ministry. This Government lasted for little more than two years. But it was of momentous importance, because of two great controversies which it raised.

The Wilkes Case.—The first was the Wilkes question. In No. 45 of his paper, the *North Briton*, Wilkes had described a statement in the king's speech as a lie. The Government thought they had got the scurrilous fellow, and prosecuted him for "seditious libel." He was arrested on a "general warrant" (*i.e.* a warrant containing no names) directed against the "authors, printers, and publishers" of the paper. Such warrants had often been used by governments—Pitt himself had used them. But on this occasion Chief Justice Pratt declared that such warrants were illegal. The decision was important, because it implied that the Government could not wield any powers in the courts of law which were not open to ordinary citizens. The House of Commons joined in the attack on Wilkes, expelling him from his seat; and the House of Lords charged him with breach of privilege for having written a foul squib about one of the bishops. Wilkes did not await his trial. He fled to France, feeling that (as he was loaded with debt) he was not safe when he had lost the freedom from arrest that went with his seat in Parliament. But for a short time he was a popular hero, because he was regarded as a victim of power; and this squalid episode did much to discredit both the king and the Government. It quite obscured the much more important questions of colonial policy which Grenville was meanwhile raising.

Proclamation of 1763.—Grenville was an industrious and thoughtful politician who had a great deal of knowledge about American affairs, and he did his best to deal fairly with the very difficult questions which the war had raised. French Canada was still under military rule. In 1763 Grenville issued a proclamation in which he promised that self-governing institutions should be set up in Canada—which had never enjoyed any such rights before; but the promise was not fulfilled until 1791. The same proclamation also provided that in the newly-conquered territories no land could legally be acquired from Indians except under conditions which ensured that the Indians should know what they were doing. This was the first attempt to protect native races against white exploitation. It was very unpopular among the American colonists. Still more

unpopular was a provision for setting apart the greater part of the new territories west of the Alleghanies as a native reserve. This contributed to increase the bad feeling against the home government which was growing among the colonists.

Regulation of American Trade.—Grenville also tried to improve the trade-system, which had been working very badly. There were hundreds of Acts, and with immense labour he strove to revise and codify them, so as to make the whole system workable. In particular, he revised Walpole's foolish Molasses Act,* greatly reducing the duties on imported French sugar. He gave bounties on a number of colonial products. He had found that the dues on colonial trade (which the colonists recognised as valid) were in fact evaded on a wholesale scale, so that they yielded scarcely any revenue. His general idea was to reduce them and make them reasonable, but at the same time to see that they really were collected. For this purpose he employed naval vessels on coastguard duty in America, and set up an Admiralty Court to try smuggling cases. All this was intensely unpopular among the colonists, who had long been accustomed to defy the trade restrictions, while profiting by the monopoly they enjoyed for their products in British markets.

The Stamp Act.—A third problem which Grenville tried to tackle was the defence of the colonies. The French danger was now removed. It had been removed almost wholly at the expense of the mother-country, who had had to pay even the costs of the colonial contingents. The continued security of the colonies depended upon the British fleet, towards which they made no contribution. The huge national debt had been largely incurred on their account. Grenville did not ask them to contribute to these expenses. But they still needed an army for their defence. This was demonstrated in 1763–1764 when there was a dangerous Indian rising (the Conspiracy of Pontiac) which would have led to widespread slaughter and devastation if it had not been checked by British forces. And as the colonists refused to maintain any forces of their own, a small British army had to be maintained for their protection. It seemed fair that they should contribute towards the cost of this. The trade dues would not nearly cover the cost. Grenville consulted with colonial representatives as to how this contribution should be raised. From some of them he got the reply that as the colonies would not

* Above, p. 371.

combine, and would not contribute separately, the only way was to impose a tax by the authority of the British Parliament. In 1764, therefore, Grenville proposed that stamps should be required upon certain kinds of documents: the proceeds, estimated at £100,000, would be partly paid by the West Indies, and would cover less than a third of the remaining cost of the army. He allowed a year for the discussion of this proposal, and for the suggestion of alternative methods. No alternatives were suggested. In 1765, therefore, the *Stamp Act* was passed by Parliament, with scarcely a word of criticism. Nobody anticipated the storm it was going to raise; neither Pitt nor the Whigs voted against it.

Colonial Resistance.—The passage of the Stamp Act produced an immediate upheaval in the colonies. It was proclaimed to be a denial of the principle of "no taxation without representation." There were riots, and agreements to boycott British goods. In England Pitt supported the view of the colonists, asserting that they would be slaves if they paid taxes about which they had not been consulted. When it was argued that the trade dues (to which in principle no objection was taken) were in fact taxes imposed by Parliament, the answer was given that there was a difference between "external" taxation, which was legitimate, and "internal" taxation, which was tyranny.

The Rockingham Ministry.—George III and Grenville thought all this clamour unreasonable, and would have liked to insist upon the tax. But they were already on bad terms with one another on other issues: Grenville was just as dictatorial as the old Whig ministries had been. In 1765 Grenville was dismissed; and after another vain attempt to get Pitt, George fell back reluctantly upon the Old Whigs, now led by the Marquis of Rockingham. The Rockingham ministry, which lasted only a year, was a feeble and ineffectual government. It had only one great name, Edmund Burke,* who was Lord Rockingham's private secretary; but Burke, not being a man of family, held no office of importance. It had no secure majority, because the "placemen"—now instruments of the king—continually hampered it. It achieved only one measure of importance. It repealed the Stamp Act (1766), and the clamour died down. But it accompanied the repeal with a Declaratory Act

* There is a good short Life of Burke by John Morley (English Men of Action).

asserting the right of taxation. To assert a right without endeavouring to enforce it was mere folly, especially as it was the claim of a right to tax, rather than the actual burden, which the colonists resented.

In 1766 George got rid of Rockingham. He had at last succeeded in persuading the great Pitt, now Earl of Chatham, to join him in forming a non-party ministry, not dominated by any single clique. The great experiment of non-party government, according to the ideas of Bolingbroke, was to be given a fair trial.

3. Non-party Government and Growing Confusion (1766–1770)

The Chatham Ministry.—Chatham succeeded in getting together a ministry which included a number of very able men, drawn from many different groups. Judged by the capacity of its individual members, it was, indeed, the ablest ministry of the period. But because it was not a party ministry, its members did not see eye to eye. They were a group of ministers, each dealing with the affairs of his own department, rather than a united Cabinet; and consequently there was no coherence in their policy.

Chatham's Disillusionment.—Chatham had entered upon office with high hopes. He meant to settle the American problem. He meant to reorganise the government of British India. He meant also to restore the prestige of Britain in Europe, which had suffered seriously from the confusion of the last few years. He knew there was a danger that France and Spain would seek vengeance for their recent defeat—as they actually did ten years later—and he wanted to build up an alliance to guard against this danger. But he found that the European powers looked with suspicion upon Britain, because her policy seemed to be uncertain and shifting. Frederick the Great of Prussia, in particular, would have nothing to do with her. He had not forgiven the desertion of himself in 1763, and he thought that Britain had become "a sort of island-Poland." The consequence was that when the next ordeal came, in 1777, Britain found herself alone and friendless.

Failure of Non-party Government.—Disillusioned about foreign affairs, Chatham was also disillusioned about non-party cabinets. He could not get his discordant colleagues to agree upon a definite policy. He withdrew into seclusion, physically and mentally ill, and left them in the lurch: in 1768 he resigned, and in the next

year he was leading the opposition to the ministry which he had himself formed. His loyal henchman, the Duke of Grafton, who was left as nominal head of the Government, had no control over his colleagues, and felt that he had been most unfairly treated. More and more the king became the only unifying force in the discordant ministry, which drifted from blunder to blunder.

The Corsican Question.—In foreign affairs this Government had no influence at all. The episode of Corsica (1768–1769) served to illustrate its impotence. The Corsicans were in rebellion against their Genoese masters, and asked to be taken under British protection. The Genoese, unable to subdue them, offered to sell the island to France. If Chatham had been himself, and in control of affairs, it is certain that he would have accepted the Corsican offer ; and France, so recently defeated, would not have risked war with Britain. Shelburne, the Secretary of State, who was a disciple of Chatham, wanted to take the island. But other members of the ministry sent private word to France that Britain would not go to war about Corsica, and France bought the island (1769). That same year Napoleon Buonaparte was born in Corsica. But for Chatham's illness, Napoleon would have been a British subject, and the history of the world would have been different.

Colonial Taxation.—In colonial affairs this Government took up the work which Grenville had dropped. Shelburne worked out an elaborate scheme for the administration of the western territories and for the protection of the Red Indians. This was unpopular among the colonists, who wanted to be left free to do as they liked in the new territories. But it won the friendship of the Red Indians, who henceforward regarded the British Government as their friend. More important, the brilliant and irresponsible Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, took up once again the question of getting a revenue from America for the cost of defence. The colonists had denounced "internal" taxation, but admitted the validity of "external" taxation. They should therefore be taxed "externally" ; and Townshend imposed duties on tea, glass, and painters' colours imported into America (1767).

Colonial Resistance.—At once a storm broke out, as violent as that caused by the Stamp Act. The Act stated that the purpose of the duties was to raise a revenue ; and it was precisely the claim of a right to raise revenue to which the colonists objected. Most of the colonies made agreements to boycott British goods. The

Massachusetts Assembly took the lead in resistance, and refused to dissolve when the Governor tried to dismiss it. The disorders in Boston reached such a pitch that two regiments were sent from Halifax to maintain order (1768). The soldiers had a very uncomfortable time. In 1770, during a riot in the town, shots were fired, and three of the crowd were killed. This was known as the Boston Massacre, and denounced as an evidence of the brutal tyranny of George III. It was evident that the taxes could not be enforced. In March 1770, the Government decided to withdraw them; but, in order to maintain the principle, the duty on tea was preserved, though only by a majority of one—so deeply divided was the Cabinet. Such was the result, in America, of non-party government.

The Middlesex Election.—At home, meanwhile, a controversy had been raised which almost entirely obscured the American question. Wilkes returned from his exile, stood his trial for libel, and submitted to his sentence. Then, in the election of 1768, he was elected as member for Middlesex. The House of Commons declared the election invalid, on the ground of his previous expulsion. At a second election he was returned again, and again expelled. When he was returned at a third election, the House of Commons, led by the Government, declared his opponent elected. This aroused a constitutional controversy of the fiercest kind. It was all the fiercer because in the election of 1768 wholesale corruption, out of public funds, had been employed to ensure a majority for the King's Friends. The whole question of the parliamentary system was raised as it had never been raised before. Wilkes and the Middlesex election provided the starting-point for a constitutional agitation which never wholly died down until the Reform Act of 1832 was passed. The Whigs denounced royal corruption. Burke wrote his very effective pamphlet on the *Causes of the Present Discontents*. Chatham, returning to active politics, demanded more frequent parliaments so as to make corruption more difficult, and an increase in the number of county members. But the agitation went farther than this. A Society of Friends of the Bill of Rights was founded. It was the first English organisation for political propaganda, and it demanded a wider franchise and annual parliaments.

The Storm Dies Down.—In 1769 and 1770 it seemed as if the Government (which now meant the king) would be defeated. All the elements of opposition had combined to attack both the American policy of the king, and the treatment of Wilkes. Chatham

and the Whigs were working together. The London mob was in a state of high excitement. The mysterious *Junius* was publishing his anonymous letters in the *Public Advertiser*, denouncing the ministers with vitriolic brilliance, and not sparing the king himself. Never had political excitement been higher in England. Yet the storm died down almost as quickly as it had arisen. In reality the policy of George III was not unpopular. The bulk of opinion, both in Parliament and in the country, supported his American policy, and thought that the colonists were unreasonable. Even the excitement about the Middlesex election was short-lived, and was mainly limited to London. The Duke of Grafton resigned with a few of his colleagues; the ministry was reconstituted under Lord North (1770); and the opposition collapsed. The king had, in fact, won his victory. The ministry of North was a ministry after his own heart. It was supported by a large parliamentary majority, built up by the methods which George III had learnt from the Whigs.

4. Lord North and the Breach with the American Colonies (1770–1775)

The North Government.—Lord North was in no sense a Prime Minister. He was merely the king's agent for the management of the House of Commons and the distribution of patronage. During the twelve years 1770–1782 the king was his own Prime Minister, dealing directly with the various heads of departments, and generally controlling policy. He wielded, in fact, very much the same powers as the modern President of the United States. In other words, cabinet government, as it had developed during the period of Whig supremacy, was for the time being suspended. Both Parliament and the country seem to have accepted this system quite readily. Not only the "placemen" but the "independent country gentlemen" generally voted for the Government, and for some years the opposition of Whigs and Chathamites was weak, divided, and disheartened.

The Quebec Act.—Upon the whole, the system worked reasonably well. The North Government passed several useful measures of reform. It found a sound solution for the problem of government in Canada in the *Quebec Act* (1774), which preserved French laws and customs and allowed full freedom to the Roman Catholic religion, without trying to set up a parliamentary system for which the Canadians were not ready, and which they did not want;

and these arrangements kept the loyalty of Canada in the coming crisis, though they aroused the anger of the vehemently Protestant inhabitants of the thirteen colonies. It also dealt with the problem of India far more courageously than any of its predecessors. If it had not been wrecked by the American difficulty, George III's system might have lasted, and the cabinet system might have been forgotten as a mere device of the Whig oligarchy.

The Boston Tea Party.—Even the American difficulty seemed for a time to be losing its difficulty. The resistance to the tax of 3*d.* a pound on tea (which was the only formal ground of complaint) was gradually diminishing between 1770 and 1773, because it was difficult to maintain passionate indignation over such a matter. And in 1773 North made a change which might have been expected to ease the situation. The East India Company was almost bankrupt. To relieve its distress, it was allowed to send tea direct to America, instead of through England. Thus it would escape the 1*s.* duty levied in England, and pay only the 3*d.* duty levied in America; the Americans would get their tea more cheaply than before the Townshend duties were imposed. When the first consignment under the new rules arrived at Boston, a gang of men disguised as Red Indians boarded the ships and threw the property of the East India Company into the harbour, evidently fearing that if it was landed it might be bought (December 1773).

Penal Legislation.—The Boston tea-riot aroused deep anger in England. Lord North introduced a series of penal laws, one of which removed the custom-house from Boston to Salem, while another transferred the appointment of judges to the Crown, and made it possible (in view of the difficulty of getting convictions in America) to bring cases for trial to England. More serious, the charter of Massachusetts was cancelled. These Acts for the first time gave real colour to the charge that the British Government was an enemy to American liberty. They precipitated an open conflict.

Colonial Resistance.—The Massachusetts Assembly became practically a rebel government. General Gage began to fortify Boston against possible attack by the "rebels." And a Congress of all the colonies except Georgia met at Philadelphia (1774) to concert measures of resistance, and adopted a Declaration of Rights. But it made no constructive proposals for dealing with the difficulty. It refused to consider a scheme for a federal organisation which would be able to vote the funds needed for common defence. Tempers

were up on both sides of the Atlantic. Most Englishmen thought it unreasonable that the colonists should expect to enjoy all the advantages of naval and military protection at the expense of the mother-country, while refusing to contribute to the cost. Most of the colonists were convinced that the essentials of self-government were being challenged.

Attempts at Conciliation.—As the crisis approached, its gravity was for the first time realised in England. Chatham, in conjunction with Benjamin Franklin * (who was living in England as an agent for some of the colonies), tried to devise a scheme of conciliation (1774), but tempers were too high to give it a chance. Burke delivered two noble orations † in the House of Commons, full of profound wisdom, but they were of no avail. Even North proposed a measure of conciliation, under which any colony which made a reasonable contribution to the cost of defence should be exempted from the payment of taxes. It was too late. Over in Massachusetts the militiamen were already drilling. General Gage sent out a small force to seize and destroy a store of munitions lest the colonists should get hold of them. The troops were attacked by the local levies at *Lexington* (April 1775); and the War of American Independence began.

5. The Causes of the American Revolution

The blame for this disaster, which was to lead, after a war of seven years, to the severance of the thirteen American colonies from the British Crown, has commonly been laid upon George III, Lord North and Grenville. This is not a just judgment. Doubtless they showed too little tact and understanding of the situation. But their claim that the colonists ought to make some contribution to the cost of their own defence was in itself fair, and the colonists were at least as blind to the justice of this claim as the king was to their objections. The roots of the difficulty lay, in truth, much deeper than the mere attempt to collect a very modest sum of taxation, which was rather the occasion than the cause of the revolution.

(1) **The Trade-System.**—The old colonial system of trading regulations, devised in the seventeenth century and greatly extended

* Franklin's *Autobiography* is worth reading.

† Read these two great speeches if you possibly can. They are included in Everyman's Library.

by the Whigs, had outlived its usefulness. Although an honest attempt was made to balance the restrictions on colonial trade by monopoly rights for colonial goods in the English markets, and by bounties from the British Treasury on colonial production, and although the balance of advantage and disadvantage was about equal on both sides, it was neither wise nor safe to base imperial unity upon trade-bonds. Moreover, the system was not made by agreement, but solely by the authority of the British Parliament. Its worst features were due to the Whigs, who had tried in vain to prohibit colonial manufactures; and Walpole's Molasses Act was one of the chief causes of friction. Although the colonists never formally attacked the trade-system, they only tolerated it so long as it was not enforced. It was, in fact, one of the main causes of the difficulty. Yet nobody, on either side of the Atlantic, proposed to do away with it. Thus one of the principal causes of strife was one which never came to the forefront during the controversy.

(2) **The Governmental System.**—The system of government, whereby the Governor in each colony was appointed by the Crown but had to work with elected legislatures, was bound to work badly. There was constant friction between the Governors (who had to carry out orders from home) and their Assemblies, and this was made worse by the fact that the Governors were often badly selected. Democratic communities could not but feel that their freedom was limited by this system, and they expressed this feeling by trying to bring the Governors under their control, and by refusing security of tenure to judges. This cause of friction also never emerged openly, yet it was one of the main sources of unrest.

(3) **The Problem of Defence.**—Since the colonies always persistently refused to set up any common organisation for defence and taxation, these duties necessarily fell to the home government, whose action, however necessary, was apt to be resented. When the colonies had won their independence, they themselves found it necessary to set up a common authority in the place of the home government. Their failure to do so at an earlier date (say in 1754)* was probably the main reason for the breakdown of the old system. It was reasonable that the home country, already loaded with debt, which had largely been incurred on behalf of the colonies, should expect some contribution towards the cost of defence which this

* See above, p. 385.

system threw upon it; but the attempt to obtain this contribution was the immediate cause of the breach.

(4) **Removal of the French Menace.**—The overthrow of the French power in America had removed the main factor which kept the colonies loyal, and led them to endure the inconveniences and the restrictions on their freedom which the old colonial system involved. Montcalm prophesied, shortly before his death, that the conquest of Canada would be followed by a revolt in the English colonies. His prophecy was very quickly verified.

(5) **The Western Territories.**—The problems presented by the new territories east of the Mississippi which had recently been conquered from France were another cause of friction. The colonies regarded these lands as their property, and wanted a free hand in dealing with them; the home government regarded them as British conquests, and was resolved to administer them with a regard for the rights of their Indian inhabitants with which few of the colonies had any sympathy, and which was, indeed, a new thing in the relations between civilised and backward peoples. This difference materially contributed to intensify the friction which arose from the other causes.

A Difficult Problem.—The truth is that the colonies had grown up, and that the system which had served for their childhood was no longer suitable. They enjoyed a higher degree of freedom than any other colonies in the world, or than any other peoples in the world; and the freer a people is, the more it resents any restriction on its freedom. Even in the sphere of trade, the restrictions imposed upon the British colonists were as nothing in comparison with the rigid control exercised by France, Spain, and Holland over their colonies. It is merely absurd to say that the home government, corrupt and short-sighted as it was, was in any sense tyrannical. The problem which George III and Grenville and North had to face was a problem far too difficult for them—a problem which even Burke and Chatham never fully appreciated, and which no colonial statesman understood—a problem which was new to the world. It was nothing less than the problem of enabling a number of free communities to live together in unity without impairing the freedom of any of them. It was not the imposition of a threepenny duty on tea that separated America from Britain, but the impossibility, in that generation, with its traditions and background, of reconciling unity with liberty.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE WAR OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES (1775–1783)

1. The Colonial War (1775–1777)

A Civil War.—It was a Civil War which began in 1775. Both in Britain and in America opinion was deeply divided. In Britain, indeed, there was at first a great majority which supported the king's policy; but some of the best men—among them Chatham, Burke, and young Charles Fox,* who had deserted the Government side in 1774—sympathised with the colonists, and felt that the swollen power of the Crown, against which the colonists were fighting, was also dangerous to English liberty. In America there were many thousands who hated the idea of disruption. These were the "Loyalists"; they formed nearly half of the population, and in the middle and southern colonies were probably a majority. Over 20,000 of them fought on the king's side during the war; and when the war was over, more than 60,000 of them left their homes and their property in order to remain under the British flag. Their zeal, rightly used, might have given victory to the king.

British Advantages.—At the outset, all the advantages seemed to lie on the British side. The colonies lay in a long straggling line, hitherto linked mainly by the sea, and the sea was controlled by the Navy. The colonists had no regular army, and their militia were apt to desert the colours in order to get home to their farms. There were no recognised means of raising funds, and the Congress at Philadelphia was ill-obeyed. One thing alone maintained the colonial cause during the first years—the steadfastness of George Washington, their leader. He was the only great man produced by this war on either side; and he was continually hampered by the jealousies of his rivals in Congress. On the other hand, George III suffered from a lack of military resources. The total numbers of the British army only amounted to 38,000 at the beginning of the war, and this included the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca, and the troops that

* Sir George Trevelyan's *Early Life of Charles James Fox* is a delightful book which should not be missed.

had to be kept in reserve at home. For this reason mercenaries had to be hired in Germany; and the employment of these Hessian troops was bitterly resented by the Americans. Nevertheless, with command of the sea, and with the strength of the Loyalists stiffened by a regular army, George III ought to have been able to suppress the revolt if his resources had been well used.

The First Campaign (1775).—At the opening of the struggle * the only British force in America consisted of 3,000 men under Gage in Boston. Though his numbers were later raised to 10,000, Gage did not venture to take the offensive. He was beset by 20,000 Massachusetts militiamen under Washington. When they occupied *Bunker's Hill*, which commanded Boston (June 1775), Gage drove

FIG. 27.—Boston.

them out by a costly frontal attack. But Washington, by occupying Dorchester Heights, which commanded the harbour, made Gage's position untenable; and in March 1776 he had to evacuate Boston, withdrawing his troops by sea to Halifax. Meanwhile a New England force had invaded Canada, occupied Montreal, and besieged Quebec. But the French Canadians remained loyal; and when reinforcements arrived from England in the spring, the New Englanders had to retire. A British attempt to seize Charleston in South Carolina was beaten off.

The Declaration of Independence.—Thus the results of the first campaign were favourable to the colonists. But they knew they needed foreign help. Partly in the hope of getting it, Congress,

* For the whole war in America, see School Atlas, Plate 50*a* and *b*.

on July 4th, 1776, issued a *Declaration of Independence.* This historic document contained a bold declaration of the inalienable right of all men to liberty ; but this did not involve the grant of liberty to the numerous negro slaves of the revolting colonies. In Britain, since the famous judgment of Lord Mansfield in the Somerset case (1772), slavery was illegal, and every slave became free the moment he set foot on British soil ; in America, despite the glorious phrases of the Declaration, slavery survived for nearly a century. The Declaration contained also a formidable series of charges against the mother-country, drawn up in the spirit of the partisan rather than of the judge. It was a memorable moment in human history when, in the name of liberty, a group of self-governing communities deliberately cast off their allegiance. From this moment a new State came into existence, and we must no longer speak of the colonists, but of the Americans.

Campaign of 1776.—The ink was scarcely dry upon the Declaration of Independence when the tide of war turned against the Americans. The British army, now under the command of Lord Howe, was brought from Halifax to *Long Island* (1776), where it nearly captured Washington's army ; New York was seized, and much of New Jersey was occupied, the British forces being everywhere well received, for the Loyalists were in a majority in this region. Controlling the Middle States, the British forces separated New England and Virginia, the chief centres of resistance. Though Washington achieved a brilliant little success by surprising a detached force of Hessians at *Trenton*, his position was extremely difficult ; his troops were largely untrustworthy, and his supplies were badly organised. There seemed every reason to expect that the American resistance would be crushed in the next campaign.

Brandywine and Saratoga.—For the campaign of 1777 the main plan was that Burgoyne should advance from Canada, by the route down Lake Champlain so often used by the French, while another force from New York was to secure the line of the Hudson : this would isolate New England. Meanwhile Howe was to secure his position in the Middle States. The attempt to carry out these two plans concurrently led to disaster. Howe, taking his army round to the Delaware by sea, defeated the main American army at *Brandywine* (October 1777), and occupied Philadelphia, whence Congress had to flee hurriedly. An attack by Washington was beaten off at *Germantown ;* and Washington had to take up his

winter quarters at Valley Forge, where his army suffered the extreme of misery: if Howe had attacked it, it must have been destroyed. This side of the campaign had thus gone well for the British. But Howe had started too late, and had drawn off the forces which ought to have been advancing up the Hudson to make a junction with Burgoyne's Canadian army. Burgoyne, advancing through a thickly wooded country which lent itself to irregular backwoods fighting, had experienced many difficulties in his advance; and in October, just when Howe was winning Philadelphia, he found himself hemmed in at *Saratoga* by the levies of New England under Gates, and was compelled to surrender with his whole force.*

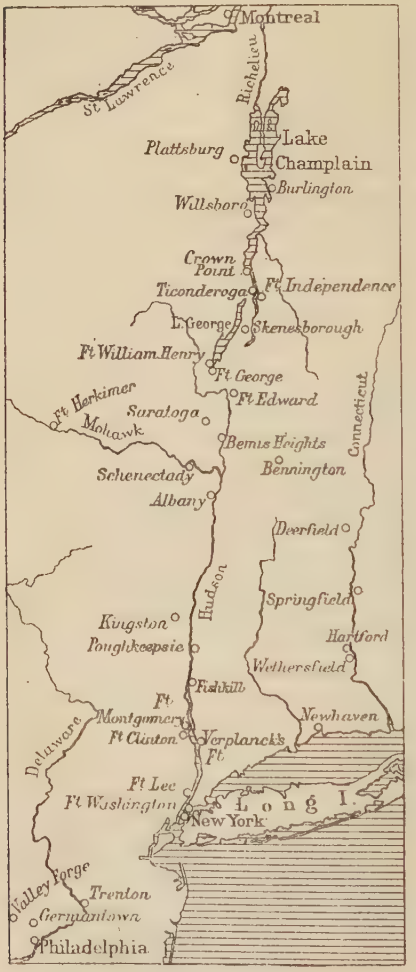

FIG. 28.—The Champlain Waterway.

France Enters the War.—The capitulation of Saratoga was the turning-point of the war. It was not in itself a very grave disaster, and the British forces still held the upper hand in the main field of fighting. But it persuaded France to join in the war. A formal treaty of alliance with the United States was concluded two months after the news of Saratoga reached France; and in

* This campaign is the subject of Bernard Shaw's play, *The Devil's Disciple*.

March 1778, France declared war against Britain. She had for some time been aiding the Americans with money and munitions, and had welcomed American privateers in her ports. She now felt that the moment had come to take her revenge for the last war. Behind France was Spain, bound to her by the Family Compact, and ready to come in at her own time. These two despotic powers, which had never granted any semblance of self-government to their own colonies, now came forward as the champions of the Americans against the mother-country which had conferred upon them the highest degree of liberty enjoyed by any peoples in the world. The entry of France into the war changed the whole character of the struggle. It became, for Britain, a life-and-death struggle against an ancient enemy.

Death of Chatham.—In this crisis Lord North, whose government had now lost the confidence of the nation, was anxious to make way for Chatham ; and if Chatham had been his old self, he might still have redeemed the situation, which was not worse than it had been in 1757. But he was now working in close alliance with the Whigs, though he differed from them profoundly. The Whigs had made up their minds that America was lost, and were for recognising its independence at once. Chatham, though eager to remove the causes of American dissatisfaction, would not consent to the disruption of the Empire. But Chatham was near his end. In April 1778, a month after the French declaration of war, he made his last speech in the House of Lords. It was in effect an attack upon the policy of his Whig friends, and an impassioned protest against "the dismemberment of this ancient and most glorious monarchy." He had to be carried out of the House after his speech, and died a few weeks later. Thus, in the crisis of her fate, Britain lost the one man who might even yet have redeemed the situation.

The conduct of the war remained in the hands of the king, and of his now discredited ministers. They showed, as we shall see, no sort of competence in the conduct of the war. But the king, great as were his defects and limitations, had one great virtue—courage ; and in the coming ordeal the courage of the nation answered to the courage of the king. It is usual to regard the later stages of the American war as a period of unmitigated humiliation. They should rather be regarded as a proof of the strength and courage of the British people even under bad leadership. For never in her history, before or since, has Britain been compelled to face so great a combination of enemies, and to face them without allies.

2. Britannia contra Mundum (1778–1782)

A Ring of Foes.—During the next four years Britain was faced by a combination of all the great naval powers, such as many had feared might follow the triumph of 1763. The intervention of France in 1778 was followed by that of Spain in 1779 and Holland in 1780, while all the northern powers—Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, and the Emperor—formed a League of Armed Neutrality, hostile to Britain. Meanwhile, in America she had to deal with the revolt of the Americans, stiffened by regular forces sent from France; and in India her infant empire was menaced by a combination of all the great native powers, stirred up in part by French influence. She had no friends or helpers anywhere in the world. That she should have emerged from this ordeal without being entirely ruined was an achievement which, twenty years earlier, would have seemed impossible.

The War at Sea.—Her very existence in this struggle depended upon the Navy; and the Navy did not fail her, though it was handled with gross incompetence by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sandwich. Meanwhile the mercantile marine had to fight for its life. Every ship had to go armed; almost every foreign vessel on all the seas of the world was an enemy. Hundreds of ships were captured in this world-wide struggle. But the captures of enemy ships made by British privateers were yet more numerous. This endless sea-war cannot be described in detail; but it was going on throughout the five dreadful years, and the gallantry of the mercantile marine was an essential part of the resisting power of Britain. The Indian side of this desperate struggle must be left for later treatment; the struggle on the seas and in America can only be baldly summarised.

Campaign of 1778.—The first result of the French entry into the war was that the British forces evacuated Philadelphia, and fell back upon New York, which continued to be the British head-quarters throughout the remainder of the war. It was feared that French forces would be sent to America; and therefore no forward movement was attempted, except the despatch of a small force to Georgia, where Savannah was occupied. This was the beginning of a new plan of attack, in which the Loyalists of the Southern States were to be made the base for a northward advance. Meanwhile everything depended upon what France was able to do with the new fleet which she had been strenuously building up since 1763. Instead

of blockading the French squadrons in their harbours, as Pitt had done during the last war, Sandwich let the French Mediterranean fleet get out of Toulon and cross the Atlantic. But it was outmanœuvred by Howe off the American coast, and departed without doing anything, to the bitter disappointment of the Americans; it then went off to the West Indies, where it captured two small islands, but was again outmanœuvred by the inferior British forces in those waters.

Intervention of Spain.—In 1779 Spain came into the war, and at once laid siege to Gibraltar. The heroic resistance of the rock-garrison, under Elliot, lasted for three years.* French and Spanish fleets—allowed to make a junction by the folly of Sandwich in failing to maintain a blockade and in scattering the British fleet in small squadrons all over the world—for a time commanded the English Channel. An invasion of England or Ireland seemed likely; and in both countries volunteer forces were hastily raised—with consequences, in Ireland, which will have to be noted later. Yet wherever the enemy attacked, he was routed—as in Jersey, which the French tried to capture; and as in Savannah, which was attacked by a French fleet and an American army. Britain was making no advance, but she was holding her own, and the Americans were rapidly losing faith in their French allies.

The Armed Neutrality: Dutch Intervention.—In 1780 Catherine II of Russia, egged on by Frederick of Prussia, formed the League of Armed Neutrality, to demand that all neutral vessels should be allowed to trade freely with belligerent ports. Britain had been using her naval strength to harass her enemies by intercepting supplies sent to them in neutral vessels. She had, in her desperate struggle, strained the laws of war at sea; she now had to fight with her strength partly crippled. In the autumn of 1780 a new enemy was added in Holland, which had been supplying stores to all the enemy belligerents; she was the most active of all the neutrals in this traffic; and when a draft treaty of alliance with the Americans was found in a captured Dutch ship (October 1780) the British Government declared war, so as to have greater freedom in trying to stamp out this traffic. The year 1780 saw, therefore, a very serious worsening in the situation.

Campaign of 1780.—Nevertheless 1780 was a year of striking

* Drinkwater's *Siege of Gibraltar* is a good contemporary narrative of this heroic episode.

British successes : after two years on the defensive, Britain began to take the initiative again. In America a big forward movement was started in the Southern States. Charleston was taken after a three-months' siege ; and Cornwallis won at *Camden* a crushing victory over the southern American army. This was a promising beginning for the projected southern campaign. On the seas Rodney,* the greatest sailor of this period, relieved Gibraltar and threw abundant supplies into the beleaguered fortress ; defeated a Spanish fleet off *Cape St. Vincent*, capturing six ships ; and then, sailing off to the West Indies, defeated a French fleet at *Dominica*, and drove it back over the Atlantic, thus securing complete command in American waters. At the end of 1780 the Americans were profoundly disheartened. They had had no help from France, with the exception of a few volunteers ; they were almost bankrupt ; many of their troops were mutinous ; and one of their best generals, Arnold, had gone over to the British side. In the autumn of 1780 the French at last sent an army to America : it ought never to have been allowed to cross the Atlantic. But the French also were distressed. They had as yet won no real success anywhere. Spain also was disheartened by her failure to make any impression upon Gibraltar. Britain was not only holding her own, but advancing. If her naval power—now greatly increased by immense activity in ship-building—had been wisely used, the issue of the war might still have been favourable.

The Critical Year 1781.—The next year, 1781, was the critical year of the struggle. Until late in the year everything seemed to be going well for Britain. Gibraltar was relieved again, and still held out ; Jersey beat off another French attack ; a dogged naval battle with the Dutch, off the *Dogger Bank*, though indecisive, practically put an end to the Dutch participation in the war ; in the West Indies Rodney captured the rich Dutch island of *St. Eustatius*, which had been the centre of the contraband traffic with America, and captured vast plunder. Cornwallis boldly pushed forward his campaign in the Southern States. He won a brilliant victory over the main American southern army at *Guildford Court-house*. In his rear, indeed, the Loyalists were gravely endangered ; but he resolved to advance boldly north into Virginia, hoping to catch Washington,

* There is a good short Life of Rodney by David Hannay (English Men of Action).

who was watching the main British forces under Clinton in New York. The plan might have succeeded if Clinton had given adequate support. But instead of doing so, Clinton (who was afraid of an attack from Washington) ordered Cornwallis to take up a defensive position on the coast, where he could be helped by the fleet. So Cornwallis reluctantly took up a position at Yorktown, on the shore of Chesapeake Bay, and waited for the fleet.

Naval Failure : Yorktown.—Meanwhile, Sandwich's suicidal failure to watch and blockade the French fleets had at last had its inevitably disastrous result. A French fleet under de Grasse had sailed unimpeded from Brest. It had gone to the West Indies, where Rodney—busy with the plunder of St. Eustatius—had not challenged it with sufficient strength. De Grasse had then sailed off to the American coast. Off the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, he met an inferior British squadron, which ought to have fought him to the death, but instead drew off. Washington, acting in conjunction with de Grasse, swiftly moved his army, and a French army co-operating with it, from the Hudson down into Virginia. Clinton, in New York, took no steps to deal with this situation until too late. And the result was that Cornwallis, beset on land by the Franco-American army, saw with despair a French and not an English fleet sailing up Chesapeake Bay. After a gallant resistance, he was forced to surrender at *Yorktown* (October 1781).

Fall of North.—This sudden and disastrous reversal of fortune—which was ultimately due to Sandwich's mishandling of the navy—put an end to the possibility of victory in America. Though British forces still held out in New York and Charleston, they had given up hope. In England the news brought a feeling of despair. It quickly led to the fall of North's government (March 1782), and the triumphant opposition of Whigs and Chathamites, who had been growing in vigour ever since 1778, had to be admitted to power by the reluctant George III. To them fell the duty of making peace ; and though George III would have been ready to carry on the struggle, the Whigs had long since made up their minds that America was lost.

"The Saints" and Gibraltar.—But the negotiations were slow, and the war still continued, at sea, though not in America. The chief scenes of fighting were the West Indies and the Mediterranean. In the West Indies * the French had captured Nevis and

* School Atlas, Plate 48.

St. Kitts, and were threatening Jamaica, and the Spaniards had taken the Bahamas, when Rodney arrived with a British fleet and inflicted upon de Grasse a crushing defeat, off the islands known as *the Saints*, near Martinique (April 1782). This victory completely re-established British naval prestige, and convinced France that nothing was to be gained by prolonging the war. Meanwhile in the Mediterranean a combined French and Spanish army had reduced Port Mahon, the chief town of *Minorca*, after a six months' siege. In September 1782, a final and desperate onslaught was made upon *Gibraltar* by an army of 40,000 and a fleet of 49 ships of the line. The garrison, who numbered 7,000, beat off all attacks; and when peace was made (February 1783) the flag was still flying on the Rock.

3. Consequences of the American War

The Terms of Peace.—The peace which concluded this confused and ill-fought war had two aspects. On the one hand, by a treaty signed in November 1782, Britain recognised the independence of the thirteen colonies,* and ceded to them the whole vast territory east of the Mississippi, except Florida, which was claimed by Spain. Canada remained British by her own choice, though the line of demarcation was not clearly drawn. On the other hand, the treaties with France, Spain, and Holland, concluded in 1783, made very little change. Spain regained Florida, which she had lost in 1763, and Minorca, which she had lost in 1713; France gained the West Indian island of St. Lucia, and the West African district of Senegal, conquered from her in 1763.

Prelude to the French Revolution.—What were the effects of this war? Contemporary opinion thought that the great days of British power were at an end, but the next few years were to provide a forcible contradiction of this view. France seemed to have re-established her prestige. In reality, she had gained nothing, and almost ruined herself. The financial strain of this war brought her to the verge of bankruptcy, and was the direct cause of the summons of the States-General in 1789, which began the French Revolution. In another way, also, the French Revolution was directly influenced by the American Revolution. French soldiers who had fought in America came back filled with democratic ideas,

* School Atlas, Plate 51.

which reinforced the teachings of Rousseau, then prevalent in France. And, having seen a wide diffusion of prosperity in America, they leaped to the conclusion that democracy brought material well-being. The American Revolution made the French Revolution inevitable.

Organisation of the United States.—But the main consequence of the war was the creation of the United States as a powerful free republic in the New World, unhampered by the feudal traditions of Europe. The essential institutions of this new State were those which it derived from the mother-country. The English common law still ruled American life ; and none of the States made any material change in the system of government they had received from the mother-country, apart from the substitution of an elected for a nominated Governor. It was found, however, to be no easy matter to work out a common system of government to take the place of the authority of the British Crown and Parliament. The infant federation almost broke down in face of the jealousies of the various States and their unwillingness to submit to any common authority : these were the very difficulties which had mainly caused the quarrel with the mother-country. There were five years of discussion before the scheme of a federal constitution was agreed upon by a Convention in 1787 ; and the individual States would only allow definite and limited powers to the new central authority. The system which was eventually set up was closely imitated from that of Britain. There was a legislature of two houses, and a President who was endowed with just the powers which George III had claimed and wielded during the government of Lord North : he chose his own ministers, and (within defined limits) was not responsible to Congress for the way in which he used his powers. Because it was based upon a sort of treaty between thirteen independent States, the new constitution was the most rigid, and the most difficult to alter, that has ever controlled the affairs of a great State. But it was framed with such wisdom that it has stood the strain of nearly a century and a half, and has fitted the needs of a community that has grown to be the biggest and richest of the world's societies.

4. The Nationalist Movement in Ireland

The American Revolution brought to a head a movement of national protest which had been gradually gaining force in Ireland since the beginning of the reign of George III.

Irish Grievances.—Every section of the Irish people had its grievances. The greatest and the most bitter were, of course, those of the Catholic majority, who were excluded from Parliament and from all public offices, and subjected to all the tyrannical restrictions of the penal code ; the great mass of Catholics were also sunk in the deepest penury. But the Catholics were almost voiceless, so effective was the system of persecution. The Presbyterians of the North, who formed a majority of the Protestants, also had their grievances : they, almost equally with the Catholics, were excluded from public life. Even the dominant Anglican minority, who formed about one-twelfth of the population, had grievances, which they shared with the rest of the nation. In the first place, Ireland was subject to trade restrictions more severe than those of America, and far more completely enforced. In the second place, the Irish Parliament had been reduced to impotence. The English Parliament claimed the right of legislating over its head. It could not pass any measure which had not previously been approved by the English Privy Council. There was no means of bringing a Parliament to an end, or getting a fresh election, save the death of the king : one Parliament had sat throughout the thirty-three years of George II's reign. There was in Ireland no Mutiny Act, to secure the control of Parliament over the army ; no security of tenure for judges ; not even a *Habeas Corpus* Act. And all Irish offices were filled by the English Government, and used for the purpose of maintaining an obsequious majority in the Irish Parliament. In protesting against these evils, the Anglican minority was asserting not only its own grievances, but those of all Ireland. The Irish Nationalist movement was actually started by the ruling Anglican minority.

Beginning of Opposition.—Protests against this system had begun early in George III's reign. They took two forms. On the one hand, there were a number of agrarian outrages, by gangs who called themselves "Whiteboys," "Oakboys," or "Steelboys" : these were the outcome of acute economic distress, and they pointed to a deep-seated evil that needed attention ; but as yet they led to nothing. On the other hand, an opposition arose in Parliament, which demanded remedies for the various political evils already described. They achieved only one modest success : an *Octennial Act*, limiting the duration of Irish Parliaments to eight years, was passed in 1768.

Grattan as Leader.—The dispute between England and the

American colonies gave new force to this movement of opposition. The grievances of the Americans, both in regard to trade restrictions and in regard to political subordination, were very like the grievances of the Irish, though far less serious. Among the Presbyterians of Ulster, especially, sympathy with the Americans was strong. It happened that the first election under the Octennial Act fell in 1776—the year of the American Declaration of Independence. In the new Parliament the opposition was far stronger than it had been, and it found a leader in Henry Grattan,* perhaps the greatest British orator in that age of great orators. Under Grattan's leadership the opposition set before itself two main objects—the removal of trade disabilities, and the withdrawal of the existing restrictions on the freedom of action of the Irish Parliament. Grattan also favoured relief for the Catholics; but here many of his followers parted company with him. Under the pressure of the war, Lord North was brought to assent to various concessions. The first measure of relief for the Irish Catholics (a very modest measure) was passed in 1778. In the same year North asked the English Parliament to remove many of the restrictions on Irish trade; but here his docile majority would not follow him, and his proposals were almost destroyed.

The Volunteers.—In the next year, 1779, came the threat of an invasion, when the fleets of France and Spain dominated the English Channel. Large forces of volunteers were raised: within a year Ireland produced 40,000 volunteers. The creation of these volunteer corps changed the political situation. They became, insensibly, political discussion clubs, and the demand for reform gained a new force. The volunteers passed resolutions demanding freedom of trade, and, in imitation of the Americans, threatened to boycott British goods unless their demands were conceded. Under this pressure North obtained from the English Parliament, in 1779 and 1780, sweeping measures for the freeing of Irish trade. Practically all that Scotland had gained through the Union was thus granted to Ireland without a Union. There was, indeed, some talk in these years of proposing an Irish Union; but it was useless, because (as the Lord-Lieutenant reported) "national feeling would not hear of it." The Irish—Anglicans and Presbyterians even more than Catholics—were aiming at national freedom.

* There is a short Life of Grattan in Lecky's *Leaders of Irish Opinion*.

Demand for Legislative Independence.—Economic freedom having been gained, the next step was legislative independence. In 1780 Grattan introduced into the Irish Parliament what was alarmingly called a Declaration of Independence. Grattan was perfectly loyal to the English connection. But he had set his face towards freeing the Irish Parliament from its subordination. The Declaration was not pressed, but the sentiment of the Irish Parliament was in its favour. And presently the volunteers, whose demands had secured liberty of trade, took up the cry. By 1781 their numbers had risen to 80,000, and they had worked out a national organisation for themselves. So formidable a body could not be disregarded. In 1782 the volunteers of Ulster held a general congress at *Dungannon*, where they met in a Protestant church, passed resolutions asserting the sole right of the Irish Parliament to make laws for Ireland, and appointed a committee to carry on the agitation. They went on—and this, coming from a purely Protestant gathering, was very significant—to declare their sympathy with the Roman Catholics, and their belief in freedom of conscience. Immediately after the Dungannon conference, Grattan moved in Parliament an address to the king asserting the legislative independence of Ireland. Almost the whole nation was in agreement. Grand juries even refused to enforce British laws.

Legislative Independence Secured.—Within a month of the Dungannon Conference, Lord North's government came to an end in England ; and the Whigs, who had proclaimed their sympathy with the Irish movement, were in power. They accepted the situation ; and in 1782 the Declaratory Act of 1719 (which asserted the power of the English Parliament to legislate for Ireland) was repealed, and the necessity for previous approval of Irish Bills by the Privy Council, embodied in Poynings' Acts, was done away with. Ireland seemed to have obtained complete legislative independence. Apart from the executive power of the Crown, she was now, in theory, bound by no constitutional link to England, and might (like Scotland before the Union) embark upon a policy wholly incompatible with that of the sister State. Next to the independence of the United States themselves, this was the most remarkable result of the American struggle. It seemed as if not merely the British Empire but the British Islands were dissolving into disunity.

5. The Breakdown of George III's System of Government

Besides transforming the situation in Ireland, the American War brought about a great change in British politics. It caused the downfall of George III's system of government, and the restoration of cabinet government. It also led to a marked growth of the demand for constitutional reform.

The Two Oppositions.—There were two distinct wings of the opposition. On the one hand, there were the Old Whigs, whose chief inspirer was Burke, but whose strength had been greatly increased when the brilliant, reckless and beloved Charles Fox joined them in 1774. They had come to be violent supporters of the American cause: Fox even came to the House of Commons dressed in the American colours. In home affairs their supreme aim was to overthrow the power which the king had built up, and to restore the old Whig methods. The other wing consisted of the followers of Chatham, led, after his death, by Lord Shelburne, a very able man, and something of a Radical; the Chathamites, though they sympathised with the Americans, hated the idea of recognising the independence of America, which the Whigs were eager to do. There was no real unity between these two sections, though they acted together.

Growing Opposition.—Until 1777 the king's system seemed to be secure, and the opposition was quiescent. But after the disasters of that year and the intervention of France, the credit of the Government declined, and the opposition became more vigorous. In 1778 and 1779 the Whigs put forth their proposals for destroying the sources of the king's power by taking out of his hands the means of buying a majority in the House of Commons—the means which the Whigs themselves had used in the days of their greatness. One of these was the abolition of needless offices held by the "placemen" in the House: it was known as "economical reform." Another was the disfranchisement of revenue officers, who controlled the elections in some boroughs; a third was the exclusion of contractors from Parliament—giving contracts to members was one of North's methods of bribery.

The Gordon Riots.—The political contest became acute in 1780, which was a year of intense excitement. In that year London was disgraced by anti-Catholic riots, in protest against an Act for the relief of English Catholics which had been passed in 1778. The

leader of the protest was a half-mad fanatic, Lord George Gordon. For some days London was in the hands of the rioters, and the hidden under-world of the great city was stirred up : only the king had the courage needed to suppress this ugly outburst.* The Gordon Riots were unimportant in themselves ; but they were a sign of the general excitement and a proof of the existence of ugly social conditions.

Reform Movements.—More important were the political movements of 1780. There was a general election in that year, and the new House of Commons was much less favourable to the king than its predecessor. Though it would not pass the Whigs' Bills, it adopted a resolution "that the power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished"—an ominous sign of revolt. And outside Parliament a popular agitation began, the like of which had never been seen before. Great county meetings were held, first in Yorkshire and then in other counties, to demand "economical reform." And they did not stop here. They went on to demand parliamentary reform, though the Whigs disliked this extension of the programme ; and a powerful Society for Constitutional Information was founded to carry on propaganda work for parliamentary reform throughout the country. Thus a remarkable constitutional movement was afoot in England.

The Rockingham Ministry.—When Lord North fell in 1782, the opportunity for overthrowing the king's system of government had arrived. George III had to accept a ministry in which Whigs and Chathamites were combined under the leadership of Lord Rockingham, and Charles Fox and Lord Shelburne, as Secretaries of State, were responsible for the peace negotiations. From the first they found it impossible to work together, and a split between the two sections of the opposition was obviously coming. But before it came, the Whig programme of *Economical Reform* was carried into law, the main Bill being in the charge of Burke. The number of sinecure posts and places was enormously cut down ; revenue officers were disfranchised ; and contractors were excluded from Parliament. The result was that it was no longer possible for any government to obtain a majority by the corrupt methods which had been habitually employed ever since 1714, and, indeed, ever since 1660. This implied a great change, and it cut away the foundations of the personal

* Dickens's *Barnaby Rudge* deals with this episode.

power which George III had built up by using the methods of Walpole. The parliamentary reformers, now numerous throughout the country, hoped that the rotten and pocket boroughs would next be attacked. But this was no part of the Whig programme, though Shelburne and the Chathamites were in favour of it; for the Whig magnates owned many rotten boroughs.

The Shelburne Ministry.—In 1782 Lord Rockingham died, and at once the Government split in two. Shelburne would not serve under Fox, nor Fox under Shelburne. George III observed the split with satisfaction; and invited Shelburne to form a ministry. In this new government the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was given to a boy of twenty-three—William Pitt the younger,* son of the great Chatham, who had entered Parliament in 1780. He had already made a name for himself by taking up the cause of parliamentary reform. But Shelburne's ministry had no majority in the House of Commons—especially now that so many "places" had been abolished. He could count on about 140 votes, while Fox had about 90, and some 120 Tories recognised North as their leader.

The Coalition of Fox and North.—It seemed impossible that Fox and North, who had been denouncing one another for nine years, could combine, and incredible that North, who had so long been George III's obedient instrument, would turn against the king. But the unlikely happened. Fox and North formed a Coalition, defeated the Government, and forced the king to accept them as ministers. This was the first occasion upon which a majority of the House of Commons, by a definite vote, compelled the king to accept a particular ministry. The Coalition of Fox and North shocked public opinion, and deeply discredited its authors. It did not last long. Its only important measure was an India Bill, which proposed that all the patronage of the East India Company should in future be administered by a Commission to be appointed in the first instance by the House of Commons. This laid Fox open to the charge that, having destroyed the king's system of corruption, he was creating a new system of corruption under his own control. The House of Lords (stimulated by the king) threw out the Bill; whereupon the king contemptuously dismissed the ministry, and invited

* There is a very good short Life of Pitt by Lord Rosebery (Twelve English Statesmen).

young Pitt, an untried man of twenty-four, and the darling of the parliamentary reformers, to become Prime Minister.

Pitt's Ministry : the Election of 1784.—With sublime self-confidence, Pitt accepted the charge. He had no majority, and all the most famous orators in the House of Commons were arrayed against him. For three months he carried on single-handed, refusing to resign ; then he obtained a dissolution. In the election which followed, a keener interest was taken by the whole country than in any previous election of the eighteenth century. Pitt's famous name helped him ; the Coalition was a millstone round the necks of its authors ; the enthusiastic parliamentary reformers used every effort to secure a victory for their hero. And the result was that Pitt was returned by an overwhelming majority, supported by a personal vote of confidence from the nation which made him more independent of the borough-mongers, and also more independent of the king, than any previous minister. The election of 1784 was, indeed, the first election in modern history which turned on a vote of confidence or no confidence in a particular political leader. It therefore marked a very important stage in the development of parliamentary government ; and with it a new era opened.

Restoration of the Party System.—George III, at the beginning of his reign, had set out to destroy the party system, and to restore the independent authority of the Crown. He had overthrown the Whig oligarchy by using its own weapons, and had for a time made himself the effective head of Government. He had succeeded, also, in preventing a restoration of Whig power. But the old methods of corruption which both he and the Whigs had used had now been largely destroyed. On the other hand, he had not succeeded in destroying the party system. The Whig party remained, weakened but purified, no longer broken up into cliques, and giving a willing loyalty to an able leader, Charles Fox. On the other side a new party had come into being, partly drawn from the remnants of the old Tories, partly recruited from George III's own adherents, partly composed of the followers of Chatham, who had always called himself a Whig. They also were bound together by personal loyalty to a leader, William Pitt—the founder of what may be called a new Tory party. Pitt and Fox henceforward faced one another as eternal rivals on the two sides of the House. They were the first of the long series of rival leaders whose opposition has played so great a part in British politics. From 1784 onwards the aspect of the House

of Commons, divided between two definite parties, was what it was to be during the course of the nineteenth century. The sharp rivalry of two organised parties, which had scarcely existed since 1714, had become the dominant fact in British politics.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH POWER IN INDIA (1740–1785)

1. India in the Eighteenth Century

The series of wars which have been outlined in the last four chapters had their counterpart in distant India, where they led to the establishment of an amazing and undesigned British empire. But the course of events in India was mainly governed by conditions in India itself; and for that reason it is best treated as a separate story.

India under the Moguls.—When the traders of the East India Company first came to India at the beginning of the seventeenth century, they found the greater part of that vast sub-continent under the rule of a powerful and consolidated government, that of the Mogul Empire, with its capital at Delhi. Founded by Baber (a contemporary of Henry VIII) and consolidated by Akbar (a contemporary of Elizabeth), the Mogul Empire was at the height of its splendour in the seventeenth century *—the period when the splendid palaces and mosques of Delhi and Agra were erected. It was a Mohammedan power, while the mass of its subjects were Hindus; Mohammedan rulers had in fact governed the greater part of India since the twelfth century. The Mogul Empire included the whole of the Indus and Ganges valleys. In southern India, which has always had a separate history from the north, there were three minor Mohammedan States, while on the south-east coast (the Carnatic) there were a number of small Hindu principalities. Even under the Moguls India was never united: it had never been united in all its history. Moreover, it had always been governed by foreign conquerors, mostly (like the Moguls) invaders from the north-west.

* There is a map of India under the Moguls in the larger Atlas, Plate 30*a*.

This fact, together with the innumerable varieties of race, language and caste by which the Indian peoples were divided, had prevented the upgrowth in India of any sentiment of nationality or patriotism. This fundamental fact explains the ease with which the Indians accepted foreign rule, and even supplied the soldiery by which this rule was established.

Fall of the Mogul Empire.—So long as India was governed by powerful native States, it was impossible for a body of traders to dream of obtaining political power. But at the beginning of the eighteenth century India fell into a condition of confusion. The Mogul Emperor Aurangzib (who was contemporary with Charles II and William III) had set himself to extend his dominions over the south. He had overthrown the existing powers of the south, and set up a great viceroyalty for the whole of the Deccan (the southern plateau) with its capital at Hyderabad, near the diamond mines of Golconda. But he had overstrained his power. The warlike robber clans of the Marathas (on the west coast, behind Bombay) had proved unconquerable, and their elusive horsemen had raided the whole country. When Aurangzib died, in 1707, the Mogul Empire was already undermined ; it collapsed during the next generation. Afghans raided the north through the Khyber Pass, even sacking Delhi in 1739 ; while the Maratha chieftains extended their raids over every part of the country, and began to build up a formidable empire, or confederacy of States, of which the head was the prince known as the Peshwa, with his capital at Poona. In 1750 it seemed as if the future supremacy of India lay between the Afghans and the Marathas.

India in the Eighteenth Century.—Meanwhile the nominal viceroys of the Mogul made themselves independent in Bengal, in Oudh and in Hyderabad ; the Sikhs (a warlike religious sect in the north-west) began to create a separate power in the Punjab ; and many petty rajas set up as sovereign princes. The Mogul, still recognised as suzerain, was penned up in impotence in his gorgeous palace at Delhi. In this chaos it was easy for adventurers to carve out States for themselves : one such was Hyder Ali,* an able and ruthless Mohammedan soldier, who made himself master of the Hindu State of Mysore, in the south, in 1761. What Hyder Ali did, it was equally possible for the European traders to do, once the

* There is a short Life of Hyder Ali by L. B. Bowring (Rulers of India).

idea occurred to them. Amid the chaos, they had already fortified their stations, and raised forces of Indian soldiers—*sepoys*—whom they trained in the European fashion ; and they had already discovered that small forces of European-trained troops could defeat vastly superior numbers of the ill-organised Indian levies.

2. The First Stage : Dupleix and Clive in the Carnatic

The Schemes of Dupleix.—The first European to whom the idea of using this opportunity occurred was François Dupleix,* who was governor in succession of the French trading-stations at Chandernagore (Bengal) and Pondicherry (near Madras). The French Company, though active, had nothing like the trade of the English Company. Dupleix conceived the notion that if he could establish his influence at the native courts, the English might be put at a disadvantage, or even driven out. Another enterprising Frenchman was at hand to help—Labourdonnais, Governor of the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean, who had with immense energy built up a fleet in anticipation of the coming struggle with the English. Both Dupleix and Labourdonnais were ready for action in 1740, when the Austrian succession war began ; and their opportunity came when, in 1744, formal war was declared between France and Britain.† They made an onslaught on the British station at Madras, and captured it (1746) ; the British were left with only the little Fort St. David. When a British fleet came out and attacked Pondicherry without success, the prestige of the French rose high in Southern India.

French Influence in Southern India.—In 1748, however, by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Madras had to be handed back to the British East India Company. Dupleix was disappointed ; but he could still make use of the prestige which he had acquired, and the military strength which he had built up. He resolved to throw himself into Indian politics. He put up a French protégé as a claimant for the throne of the Carnatic—the district in which both Madras and Pondicherry lay—hoping to establish his influence so as to get a monopoly of trade. The British traders, fearing this consequence, were constrained to support a rival claimant, Mohammed

* There is a short Life of Dupleix by G. B. Malleson (Rulers of India).

† For the remainder of this Chapter, see School Atlas, Plate 53*a*.

Ali. But they were less energetic than Dupleix: the French protégé was soon master of the Carnatic, and by 1750 Mohammed Ali was holding out with difficulty in the fortress of Trichinopoly. Nor was this the end of Dupleix's success. He had also taken up the cause of a claimant to the far greater throne of Hyderabad, of which the Carnatic was a vassal-state. Here also he was successful; and his protégé, now Nizam of Hyderabad, not only heaped honours upon him, but engaged an army, officered by Frenchmen, to defend

FIG. 29.—India under Clive and Warren Hastings.

him. This army, commanded by the Marquis de Bussy, in practice controlled the government of Hyderabad; and a little later (1755) the Nizam transferred to the French an extensive province known as the Northern Circars, to pay for the maintenance of Bussy's army. Thus Dupleix had achieved an extraordinary success. He dominated Southern India, and the British Company seemed to be at his mercy.

Clive at Arcot.—This was the situation in 1751, and it was highly perturbing to the British: they would be ruined unless they were able, at the least, to restore the power of Mohammed Ali;

and Mohammed Ali was locked up in Trichinopoly, besieged by French and Indian forces against which the small available British contingents could do nothing. At this crisis Robert Clive,* an adventurous young clerk in the Company's service who hated his desk, made a daring suggestion, which a new governor, Thomas Saunders, had the courage to adopt. Clive suggested that, while the French and Indian troops were occupied at Trichinopoly, he should make a raid on *Arcot*, the capital of the Carnatic. He did so with 500 men, captured the city, stood a siege by 10,000 men for fifty days, and then sallied forth and beat them in the open; an incredible achievement, which not only drew off the besiegers from Trichinopoly, but raised British prestige to the highest point. Next year (1752) Trichinopoly was relieved, Mohammed Ali was enthroned at Arcot, and the British side was triumphant, at any rate in the Carnatic. The French, however, still had the best of the position, so long as they were dominant at Hyderabad. But in 1754 the French East India Company, taking alarm at the neglect of trade for costly wars, recalled Dupleix in disgrace, and put a stop to all fighting. By doing so they sacrificed their chance of winning an empire in India.

3. Second Stage: Mastery in Bengal and the Defeat of Lally

The Seven Years' War in India.—In the very next year, 1755, war began between France and Britain in America, and in 1756 the Seven Years' War opened. The French Government sent out a fleet and an army under Count Lally, an exiled Irishman, to co-operate with Bussy in establishing French supremacy. But the British Government, for once taking time by the forelock, had already sent out Clive (who had meanwhile gone home) with a small force and a squadron of six ships under Admiral Watson. Lally did not reach India until 1758. Clive arrived in 1756. He had no sooner reached Madras (which was expected to be the chief scene of fighting) than he was sent hurrying north by terrible news from Bengal.

The Black Hole of Calcutta.—The English station at

* Clive is the subject of one of Macaulay's most brilliant essays. There are also short Lives of him by Sir Charles Wilson (English Men of Action) and by G. B. Malleson (Rulers of India).

Calcutta, on the Hooghly, had long enjoyed exceptional prosperity : it was already, indeed, the richest trading-station in India. Its wealth invited attack. In 1756 a new Nawab succeeded to the throne of Bengal—a vicious and degenerate youth named Siraj-uddaula. He suddenly attacked Calcutta, drove most of the residents to take refuge on a small island in the Hooghly, shut up 146 who remained in a horrible cell known as the Black Hole, where 123 of them were suffocated during a June night ; and then drove the survivors in chains to his capital of Murshidabad.

The Battle of Plassey.—This outrage had to be avenged. Clive with his little force reached Bengal in December 1756, recaptured Calcutta in January 1757, and forced Siraj-uddaula to promise restitution. But the Nawab had no intention of fulfilling his promise. He started negotiations with the French for a combined attack upon the British ; whereupon Clive seized the French station of Chandernagore. Clive also opened a secret intrigue with some of Siraj-uddaula's discontented subjects, notably his treasurer, Mir Jafar, who agreed to desert the Nawab, and to pay vast sums to the British if he was placed upon the throne. In June 1757, at *Plassey*, Siraj-uddaula's huge undisciplined host was defeated by Clive's army of 3,000 men. Mir Jafar became Nawab ; his treasury was emptied to satisfy his allies ; and henceforth he was a mere puppet, and the Company was the real ruler of Bengal. The district immediately behind Calcutta was handed over to the direct administration of the Company.*

Lally in India.—In the next year—too late—Lally and his French army landed in Southern India, and, calling in Bussy's force, made an attack upon Madras. Madras was saved by the opportune arrival of a British fleet ; and in Bussy's absence Clive sent a force from Bengal to occupy the French province of the Northern Circars (1758). Thereupon the Nizam of Hyderabad deserted his French allies, and came over to the British side. Lally still fought gallantly in a difficult campaign ; but in January 1760, he was decisively defeated at *Wandewash*, by Sir Eyre Coote, one of Clive's men from Bengal. In 1761 Pondicherry was captured, and the dream of a French empire in India was finally dissipated. Meanwhile, in Bengal, an attack upon the British power by the neighbouring State of Oudh had been beaten off at *Patna* (1758). By 1760 the Com-

* School Atlas, plate 53*b*.

pany's mastery in Bengal was secure, and Clive returned home, having, in three years, created an empire. He took with him an immense fortune, from the Nawab's treasures. He could have taken what he liked ; and, as he afterwards said, he was "surprised at his own moderation."

4. English Misgovernment in Bengal : the Agreement of 1765

Power without Responsibility.—It was a very anomalous power which had thus been established. The East India Company had not annexed any territory, or assumed any responsibility for government. But in two regions as big as European countries—Bengal and the Carnatic—the native rulers were absolutely dependent upon it, and dared not resist any demands of its servants. The Company's agents—seven thousand miles away from any authority that could control them—enjoyed almost absolute power without any responsibility. Such a situation is always dangerous ; it was doubly dangerous when the power was wielded by men who had no permanent interest in the country they controlled, and whose sole aim was to make fortunes as rapidly as possible in order that they might escape from their banishment and return to England. Under these conditions the British power in Bengal proved, during the next few years, to be nothing but a curse. The Company's servants exacted huge gifts from the Nawab and his officers. They refused to pay dues on their private trade, thus submitting the Indian traders to grossly unfair competition. Everywhere they behaved as masters, but they took none of the responsibility of masters. The Indian system of government was in any case inefficient ; its inefficiency was increased in these conditions.

Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim.—In 1760 the Company's servants deposed Mir Jafar, and enthroned his son-in-law, Mir Kasim, exacting from him immense gifts. He was also made to transfer the three districts of Burdwan, Midnapur, and Chittagong,* to pay the costs of the Company's army ; these were (except the Calcutta district) the first districts brought under direct British administration. Mir Kasim turned out to be a vigorous and able ruler. But the Company's servants were alarmed by his efficiency,

* School Atlas, Plate 53*b*.

especially when he abolished trade dues in order to put the Indian traders on a level with the foreigners. They actually insisted that the duties should be reimposed, in order to preserve their unfair advantage. The Governor, Vansittart, and young Warren Hastings,* who was also a member of the Company's Council, tried to support the reforming Nawab. But they were overridden by their colleagues. Mir Kasim was driven into revolt (1763) and Vansittart and Hastings returned in disgust to England. But the rebellious Nawab was easily defeated. He took refuge with the powerful neighbouring Nawab of Oudh, with whom the impotent Mogul Emperor, banished from Delhi by the Marathas, was then dwelling. The Nawab of Oudh thereupon invaded Bengal. He was utterly defeated at *Buxar* (1764); and now Oudh, as well as Bengal, seemed to lie at the mercy of the Company.

The Settlement of 1765.—Meanwhile the directors of the Company at home had taken alarm at the reports which were reaching them regarding the condition of affairs in India. In 1765 they sent out Clive once more, to restore order and decent government. Clive arrived just after the Battle of Buxar, which gave him an opportunity of making a new settlement. The new arrangements which he made, by treaties with the Mogul and with Oudh, mark a definite stage in the development of British power. He made an alliance with Oudh, which lasted for nearly a hundred years. He took the Mogul under the protection of the Company, providing him with a territory by cutting off certain lands from Oudh, and promising him a large annual tribute from Bengal: the Mogul, powerless as he was, was a useful protégé, because his *firmans* or grants gave a legal colour to whatever his masters wanted to do. In return for these promises, Clive obtained from the Mogul the *Diwani*, or right of collecting the revenue, in Bengal, and this put the Company's position on a new footing. In theory the Nawab of Bengal was now responsible for the conduct of administration, while the Company was responsible for the collection of all the revenues of the country; after paying the Mogul's tribute, and a fixed allowance to the Nawab for the expenses of government, it would be entitled to keep the balance for itself.

* Macaulay's brilliant essay on Warren Hastings is grossly unjust to that great man. It should be corrected by the short Life by L. J. Trotter (Rulers of India).

The System of Dual Government.—This arrangement was hailed in England as ensuring to the Company a vast income, quite apart from its trade profits ; and Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer in Chatham's non-party government, demanded a share of the plunder, in the form of an annual payment of £400,000 to the British Treasury (1767). In reality all the revenues of Bengal (which had been greatly disorganised by the confusions of the last few years) were needed for the government of Bengal. The Company never made any margin of profit. From the first, Clive's elaborate system of "dual government" did not work. The Company never attempted to collect the revenue itself : it let out the job to Mohammed Reza Khan, an Indian statesman, who was carrying on the government on behalf of the new Nawab, an infant. Mohammed Reza Khan, in fact, carried on the whole work of government, subject always to the dictation of the Company's servants ; and as he had neither power nor prestige, the Government became more and more inefficient, and the revenue steadily shrank.

Disorganisation of the Company.—The misconduct of the Company's servants continued. They grew rich, and returned to England with huge fortunes, and raised the price of pocket boroughs by their eagerness to get into Parliament—greatly to the annoyance of English politicians. Disgust at the conduct of these "nabobs," as they were called, had a good deal to do with awakening the conscience of England about what was going on in Bengal. In 1770 there was a terrible famine in Bengal. One-third of the population died. Yet it was reported in England that the Company's servants were making fortunes out of the sufferings of the starving population by speculating in foodstuffs. And, while the Company's servants gained wealth, the Company itself, despite all its conquests, was on the verge of bankruptcy. In 1769 the adventurer Hyder Ali, of Mysore, invaded the Carnatic, devastating and plundering ; and the cost of sending armies from Bengal to resist him completed the Company's undoing. Instead of paying £400,000 to the British Treasury, they had to borrow money from Government.

5. The Beginning of Reform

Parliament Intervenes.—It was by this time obvious that the British Government must take some action, and put the affairs of the Company in order. The British name was being disgraced

in the East, and the empire which Clive had won so easily was being imperilled. Two parliamentary committees investigated the condition of affairs in India, and drew up suggestions for reform. The task of reform fell to Lord North, who thus had to tackle a problem of unprecedented difficulty. In the first instance, to relieve the Company's immediate distress, North allowed them to export their tea direct to America ; this did no good, however, because it led to the Boston tea-party. But something much more drastic was necessary ; and in the *Regulating Act* (1773) North made the first attempt to define the future government of British India.

North's Regulating Act.—This Act contained four main provisions. The first was that the East India Company must communicate its Indian dispatches to Government : Government did not yet take any definite powers of control, but its influence was bound to have weight. The second was the establishment of a Supreme Court, staffed by English judges, which was to be set up in Calcutta to do justice between the Indians and the high-handed officers of the Company. The third was the conferment upon the Governor of Bengal for the time being of certain powers of control over the Governors of Madras and Bombay, with the title of Governor-General. The fourth, and the most important, was the establishment of a small governing council of five, including the Governor-General ; each of the members of the Council to have equal voting rights. Of the five, who were nominated in England, three had seen no service in India, and would therefore (it was hoped) be exempt from the temptations which beset the Company's servants. They were all to be paid high salaries.

It is obvious that this scheme was inspired by the best intentions. But it broke down completely, for reasons which will be seen in the sequel. Nevertheless it was important as the first step towards the assumption of responsibility for the government of the British provinces in India by the Government and Parliament of the home country.

Warren Hastings appointed Governor.—Meanwhile the directors of the Company had taken steps to bring about reform on their own account. In 1771 they had appointed Warren Hastings —who had passed through the most troubled years in Bengal with clean hands—as Governor of Bengal, with instructions to carry out a thorough reform of the whole system. This gave his opportunity to a remarkable man, whose work was to earn for him a place among

the greatest of Englishmen. Fortunately Hastings had two clear years as Governor before the new Councillors appointed under the Act came out; for they did not reach Calcutta until 1774. In these two years he carried out reforms which transformed the British power from a curse to a blessing. Unlike Clive, Hastings made no conquests, though he was later to be involved in hard fighting. But his constructive work was of such a character as to make him the second founder of the British Empire in India; it alone saved the empire which Clive had won from utter and complete ruin.

6. The Work of Warren Hastings (1772–1776)

Assumption of Responsibility.—To begin with, Hastings swept away Clive's unreal and unworkable "dual government." He pensioned off the Nawab, and assumed direct responsibility for the government, transferring the administration to Calcutta. He appointed collectors for each of the "districts" (equivalent to large counties) of Bengal, and made them responsible not only for collecting the revenues but for supervising the administration of justice and the maintenance of order. He got Hindu and Mohammedan scholars to define the principles of the two systems of law, and set up district courts and an appeal court. He started a revision of the system of land-revenue (the chief source of revenue in all Indian States), and made a new assessment. All this work had to be done in a hurry, because everything was in chaos; and it had to be done with the men who were available—the same men who had been abusing their irresponsible power. Nobody knew better than Hastings that he had only made a beginning, and that his first arrangements were full of defects. But he had laid the foundations of a workmanlike system of law and government, and upon these foundations all the later work was built.

Treaty with Oudh.—He also set himself to establish sound relations with the native powers of India. The Marathas were both formidable and aggressive. They had made themselves masters of the Mogul, who had returned to Delhi, and were actually claiming that the tribute for Bengal which Clive had promised to the Mogul should be paid to them. They were also threatening Oudh, the Company's ally, and were in league with the Rohillas, a band of Afghan conquerors who had recently settled to the north of Oudh. If Oudh was conquered, Bengal would be seriously menaced.

Hastings made a new treaty with Oudh which was the model for the long series of later treaties between the Company and the native States. By this treaty, a British force of sepoys was lent to the Nawab of Oudh, on condition that he paid their cost ; and Hastings allowed these troops to be used to conquer the Rohillas, thus making Oudh safe on the North. The Nawab of Oudh treated the Rohillas cruelly, and this was afterwards made a ground of attack against Hastings. But these arrangements undoubtedly added to the safety of Bengal. Hastings also refused to pay the Mogul's tribute, which would only go to the Marathas—thus saving £260,000 a year which was badly needed for the improvement of the administration of Bengal.

The New Council. — In two years Hastings had worked miracles ; and although his new system was still far from perfect, it was already better than anything Bengal had known. The officers of the Company, when definite responsibilities were imposed upon them under a strict but understanding chief, nearly all rose to the challenge. But all this constructive work was interrupted by the arrival of the new Members of Council, and the new Judges of the Supreme Court. With both, but especially with the Council, Hastings from the first found himself involved in great difficulties.

Attack on Hastings. — The members of the Council—inspired by their junior member, Philip Francis, a venomous person of great ability who was probably the author of the *Letters of Junius* —came out with the notion that all the servants of the Company were scoundrels, and that Hastings as the chief among them must be the worst. On the day of their landing they declared war against him. Having a majority of three to two, they were able to override him in everything. While he laboured to keep the administration going, they condemned all his work since 1772, tried to restore the system of dual government, cancelled his treaty with Oudh, imposed on that State a new treaty which reduced it to bankruptcy, and forced the Vizier of Oudh to allow his mother and grandmother (the Begums) to seize the State treasure on the pretext of a will by the late Vizier which was never produced. They invited charges against the Governor-General, and heard them at his own Council. The most serious charges came from Nuncomar, a Hindu intriguer of bad character whom Hastings had refused to employ. While these charges were under consideration, Nuncomar was charged before the Supreme Court with forgery by an Indian whom he had defrauded, and was found guilty and hanged. This was later made

the ground of a charge that Hastings had conspired with the Chief Justice to commit a judicial murder ; but if so, the other judges and the whole of the jury must have been in the conspiracy. This state of things lasted for two years ; but in 1776 one of the three members died, and Hastings regained power by the use of his casting-vote as chairman.

The Supreme Court.—There were difficulties also with the Supreme Court. Its English judges, administering English law, claimed to override the native courts which Hastings had set up, and which administered Indian law. For a time the whole system was reduced to confusion, until in 1780 Hastings found a way out of the difficulty by appointing the Chief Justice, Sir Elijah Impey, to be also head of the appeal court of the native system, and asking him to draw up rules to govern the relations of all the courts. These rules were the foundation of the later system. Obviously the whole system devised by the Act of 1773 was unworkable.

7. A War for Existence

Anti-British League in India. — It was fortunate that Hastings had recovered his power in 1776, which was the year of the American Declaration of Independence ; for the British power in India was now to be subjected to a terrible ordeal. As soon as France entered the war, she resolved to deliver an attack in India as well as in the West Indies, and sent out a fleet under Suffren, the ablest of French sailors ; fortunately the arrival of this fleet was long delayed. She had also done her best to stir up trouble among the native States. During the years when Hastings was reduced to impotence by his Council, the subordinate Presidencies of Madras and Bombay had been allowed to involve themselves in serious troubles with the greatest of the native States : Madras had quarrelled with the formidable Hyder Ali of Mysore, and with the Nizam of Hyderabad ; Bombay had been involved in dangerous complications with the Marathas. The result was that when the war with France broke out, Hastings was faced by an alarming combination of all the great Indian powers—Hyder Ali, the Nizam and the five chief Maratha princes. He had no ally save Oudh, which had been reduced to impotence by the Council. He could expect no help from England, whose resources were all needed for the war in America and on the seas.

The Maratha and Mysore Wars.—Hastings was not a soldier, and his heart was in constructive statesmanship. But his courage and ability were equal to the demands of this crisis. Throughout six years (1779–1784) of desperate and confused fighting, no hostile army was ever able to cross the frontiers of Bengal or of Oudh ; they were almost the only parts of India unravaged by war. Bombay and Madras were wholly dependent upon Hastings' support. He sent one army marching across India to help Bombay, and another by land from Calcutta to Madras. It is impossible here to trace the course of this confused struggle, but it was marked by many brilliant feats of war, such as the storming of the rock-fortress of *Gwalior* by a tiny force under Captain Popham (1780), and the defeat of Hyder Ali by Sir Eyre Coote at *Porto Novo* in 1782. But Hastings' patient diplomacy in breaking up the alliance of his enemies was of even greater value than the valour of the army. By 1782 he had succeeded in making peace with the Marathas. It was not until that year that the French fleet under Suffren arrived in India. It arrived only to find that the Indian confederacy had been already broken up, and that Hastings had seized all the French ports, so that Suffren was left without a base of operations ; and in spite of the brilliant campaign which he carried out against the British admiral Hughes, he was able to achieve nothing.

The Begums and Benares.—This tremendous effort, however, involved a very heavy strain upon the resources of Bengal ; and in order to meet it Hastings was driven to adopt methods of raising funds for which he was subsequently attacked. To enable Oudh to fulfil its obligations as an ally, he empowered the Vizier to reclaim from the Begums the treasure which the majority in Council had permitted them to seize. He also made large demands, in accordance with Indian usage, from the vassal Rajah of Benares. The Rajah broke into revolt, and for a time Hastings, who had gone to visit him, was in grave peril ; but the revolt was crushed. The affair of the Begums and the affair of Benares were later the main grounds of attack against Hastings.

Results of the Struggle.—When the struggle ended in 1784, the British power in India emerged without gain, but also without loss : India was the only part of the world where British prestige was strengthened rather than weakened in these years, and this result had been achieved without any help from home. Hastings did not add a single square mile to British territory in India. But because

he had created, within the existing territory, a system of government so efficient that no revolt took place in this crisis; because the British territory of Bengal was throughout these troubles unravaged by war; and because he had succeeded in holding his own against a combination of all the great powers of India, the result of his work was to establish solidly and securely the foundations of the British Empire in India.

End of Hastings' Rule.—While Hastings was fighting desperately to defend the very existence of the British power in India, Philip Francis, who had returned to England in 1780, was doing everything in his power to represent him as a monster of wickedness and tyranny. He succeeded in converting Burke and the leading Whigs to this view. If Fox's India Bill of 1783 had been carried, the first result would have been the recall of Hastings. Even when Pitt came to power, and passed the India Act of 1784 (which will be described in another place *), it was evident that Hastings was regarded with suspicion. In 1785, therefore, he resigned his office, having held it for thirteen years under the Indian sun, without a single break. He had saved the British Empire in India from destruction, and turned it from a curse into a blessing to its subjects: even amid the cruel urgency of war, he had carried on his work of reform. He was the greatest Englishman who ever served in India, and he had carried on his work in face of terrible obstacles, never for a single year enjoying favourable conditions for his work. Yet he was the only Governor-General of India who received no honour from his sovereign.

Impeachment of Hastings.—Three years after his return, in 1788, he was impeached by the Whigs for oppression and corruption, and was tried before the House of Lords in Westminster Hall. The fact of his impeachment was a proof that Britain had now awakened to the magnitude of the Indian problem and was determined to secure good government. But this was a cruel reward for noble service. The impeachment lasted for seven years. In the end, Hastings was acquitted on every charge. But the cost of the trial used up nearly all his savings, and he was left a poor man. He was still young, but Britain had no further use for one of the greatest of her sons. He retired into obscurity, finding his only reward "in the conscious applause of my own mind brightening the decline of my existence."

* Below, p. 452.

Supplementary Reading on Book VI

The ground covered in this Book is much more fully dealt with in Book VI and Book VII (Chaps i–viii) of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* (Vol I, pp. 645–814, and Vol II, pp. 1–115). For more detailed study, Grant Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*. Mahan's *Influence of Sea-power* is important for this period. Bradley's *Fight with France for North America* is readable and sound. Parkman's *Montcalm and Wolfe* (2 vols) is vividly written. Basil Williams' *Life of Chatham* (2 vols) is the standard work on its subject. Seeley's *Expansion of England* is a stimulating review of the colonial expansion of the period. There is a useful short book on the American Revolution by H. E. Egerton. For further details about India, V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India*, and Muir's *Making of British India*.

BOOK VII

RECUPERATION AND REVOLUTION

(1783–1815)

FIG. 30.—The Sea War, 1793–1815, and the Continental Blockade.

BOOK VII

RECUPERATION AND REVOLUTION (1783–1815)

Stripped of her colonial empire and loaded with debt, Britain seemed, in 1783, to have lost the great position which Chatham had won for her twenty years earlier. Nevertheless she was on the eve of one of the greatest periods of her history. She was about to be exposed to an ordeal of war far more terrible than she had ever yet endured. For the third time in her history she was about to play the leading part in resistance to a great military power which threatened to dominate the world. From this desperate conflict she was to emerge as indisputably the greatest power in the world, and as the mistress of an extraordinary empire scattered over every part of the globe.

Her ability to withstand this ordeal, and to draw from it so immense an increase of prestige and power, was due to factors that were already at work in 1783, although they were almost unobserved. The stagnation of the early eighteenth century was over, and new forces and ideas were at work. A spiritual revival, accompanied by an active humanitarian movement, was beginning to transform the character of the nation. New political ideals and new economic doctrines were at work. The immense movement known as the Industrial Revolution, which was to multiply indefinitely the power of creating wealth, and to transform the conditions of human life, was beginning. So important were these changes, and so great was their effect upon the life of the British peoples and of the world, that they must never be forgotten even amid the excitements of the most tremendous war yet fought in the world. Thus the period of revolution, in spite of the sufferings which it brought, was also a period of recuperation.

CHAPTER XXXV

WILLIAM PITT AND THE REVIVAL OF BRITISH STRENGTH (1784–1793)

1. The Political and Financial Work of Pitt

The Younger Pitt.—After the election of 1784 Pitt,* in his twenty-fifth year, held a position of extraordinary strength, because he was at once the choice of the king and the choice of the nation. He remained in power, with one brief interval, for twenty-two years; he was an omnipotent Prime Minister for nearly half of his lifetime. Though young in years, Pitt was not, and had never been, young in spirit. He had no relaxations, and very few friends. His youth was spent in a rather priggish training for greatness, and his manhood in the heavy cares of office. He had an unlimited confidence in himself, and immense industry and capacity. But he lacked his father's flaming enthusiasm, and the uncalculating ardour of his great rival Fox. His eloquence, except at great moments of crisis, was a little frigid, though he was a master of lucid and persuasive statement. He could sympathise with great causes, such as the abolition of the slave trade, but he could not run risks or make sacrifices for them. He is often quoted as one of the greatest examples of hereditary genius. But his genius was utterly unlike that of his father. It came rather from the Grenville side of the family: he had, in a superlative degree, his uncle George Grenville's methodical industry and practical capacity; he had also something of George Grenville's lack of imaginative insight. He was wholly without his father's marvellous gifts of leadership in war; and it was a disaster both for himself and for his country that it should have fallen to him to direct British affairs during the greatest of wars. He was at his best as a peace minister; but too short a time was given him in which to display his powers. Nevertheless, his work during the nine years preceding the outbreak of the French revolutionary war did much to enable Britain to face that ordeal.

The Cabinet System.—It was under Pitt that the British

* There is an excellent short Life of Pitt by Lord Rosebery (Twelve English Statesmen).

system of government assumed its modern form. He was genuinely the "Prime Minister," refusing to be merely the king's agent, like North, or the manager for a group of borough-owners, like Newcastle. He ruled through the House of Commons, like Walpole; but unlike Walpole he did not depend upon a purchased majority, for direct corruption had been brought to an end by the legislation of 1782; he depended upon the loyalty of a party. He rewarded his followers largely by a lavish distribution of peerages; under him the House of Lords was rapidly increased in size, and (after being predominantly Whig for a century) became predominantly Tory.

Pitt's Finance.—His most valuable work was done in the field of finance. During the long series of wars since the Revolution, new taxes, mainly upon imports, had been constantly imposed, each tax being assigned for a different purpose. Some commodities paid a number of separate duties, each of which went to a different account. Pitt swept away all this confusion, by the establishment of a single Consolidated Fund. He also revised the whole system of duties, making in many cases enormous reductions; thus the taxes on tea were reduced from 119 per cent. to 12 per cent. One result of this was to make smuggling less worth while; another was to encourage buyers by a reduction of price; and for these reasons, Pitt's lower duties actually yielded a higher revenue, besides greatly stimulating trade. Pitt was a disciple of Adam Smith, the founder of modern political economy, whose great book, *The Wealth of Nations*,* was published in 1776. His sympathies were with the idea of free trade, and in a commercial treaty with France, which he concluded in 1786, he made a substantial step in this direction. Unfortunately the war came within seven years of the conclusion of the treaty, and put a stop to this experiment; to meet the cost of the war, dues on trade were heaped up to a greater extent than ever.

The National Debt.—Finally, Pitt endeavoured to deal with the problem of the National Debt, which now amounted to £240,000,000, by creating a Sinking Fund (1786), into which he paid £1,000,000 per annum, to accumulate at compound interest. So long as the £1,000,000 represented a surplus of income over expenditure, this was excellent. But when the war came, there could be no surplus; on the contrary, new money had to be borrowed on an immense scale. Yet Pitt, deceived by the notion that there

* Smith's *Wealth of Nations* is included in Everyman's Library.

was something magical about compound interest, kept up his sinking-fund, borrowing money at a high rate of interest to pay off debt at a low rate of interest, and thus only adding to the nation's burdens. And because of this foolish idea about the magic of compound interest, he financed the war mainly by loans instead of by taxes, with the result that at the end of the war the nation was annually paying as much, in interest on the Debt, as would have sufficed to pay the whole annual cost of the war at the beginning. This is an illustration of Pitt's limitations. Even in his own special field of finance, everything went wrong with him as soon as he came under the shadow of war.

Parliamentary Reform.—At the beginning of his career Pitt had made his name as an advocate of parliamentary reform, and after the election of 1784 the parliamentary reformers were full of hope. But he betrayed their confidence. He introduced a Bill, indeed, for the buying-out of pocket boroughs. But he made it clear that he would not resign if he was defeated, and, of course, most of his followers (many of whom sat for pocket boroughs) voted against the Bill. He never took up the question again, being afraid to endanger his power. In the same way, while he supported his friend Wilberforce in attacking the slave trade, he would never stake the fortunes of his government upon the abolition of this cruel traffic.

Pitt was no enthusiastic reformer. Nevertheless, the interval of peace, economy, and trade revival which he gave was of great value. But it was of less value than certain other aspects of his work, and certain developments entirely independent of politics, which were meanwhile going on : to these we must next turn.

2. The Beginnings of the Second British Empire

An empire had been lost in 1783, but within the next few years the foundations of a new empire were laid.

The Canadian Colonies.—When the American revolt took place, Canada had been a purely French colony, though there were a few British settlers in *Nova Scotia*, *Newfoundland*, and *Prince Edward Island*,* all of which had obtained representative assemblies before 1775. At the end of the war, Loyalists poured out of the United States to the number of 60,000, and three-quarters of them went to

* See School Atlas, Plate 51.

Canada. The British Government gave them grants of land, stock, tools, and seeds. Many settled in *New Brunswick*, which was organised as a separate colony in 1784. Some thousands of them also went into the region of the Great Lakes, west of the French settlements—the district later known as *Ontario*. While the coastal colonies had obtained self-governing powers, these had not been conferred upon the French colony of Quebec. But the arrival in Upper Canada of English settlers, accustomed to self-government, made a change necessary. Accordingly, in 1791, Pitt passed through Parliament the *Canada Act*, which divided the colony into two provinces, Upper Canada or Ontario, and Lower Canada or Quebec,

FIG. 31.—The Canadian Colonies.

and endowed both with the normal system of a British colony—a Governor nominated by the Crown, an Executive Council, also nominated, and an elected Legislative Assembly. For the first time in their history the French Canadians thus obtained self-governing powers; they already enjoyed security for their religion, and for their system of law. Within ten years of the loss of the thirteen colonies, a group of six British colonies existed in North America.

Cook's Voyages: Australia.—Meanwhile the greatest of British explorers, Captain James Cook, had been opening out new possibilities in another region of the world.* His three great voyages

* For Cook's voyages, see School Atlas, Plate 44*a*. There is a good short Life of Cook by Sir W. Besant (English Men of Action); and *Cook's Voyages* is included in Everyman's Library.

(1768–1771, 1772–1775, and 1776–1780) took place during the period of controversy with the American colonies. Cook was the first to map out the Pacific, and to disclose in detail the coast of Australia and New Zealand, although Tasman and other Dutch explorers had discovered parts of them in the seventeenth century. Lying at the farthest antipodes, these lands, fertile as they were, would not easily have attracted settlers ; the journey was too long and costly. It was the American Revolution which led to the first settlement. For a century and a half the British Government had been in the habit of sending its convicts to the American colonies, where they had laboured as "indentured servants." That outlet was now closed. It was therefore decided to start a convict settlement in Australia,* at Botany Bay, near the modern Sydney, of which Cook had given a glowing account ; and in January 1788, 750 male and female convicts, with cattle, implements and seeds, were sent out under Captain Arthur Phillips. Other contingents followed ; and in 1793 the first group of free settlers arrived. Thus the colonisation of Australia began—under the most unfavourable circumstances—within five years of the loss of the American colonies.

Philanthropic Colonisation. — In the same year, 1788, another colony, of a wholly new type, was started in West Africa. A group of English philanthropists, anxious to find a home for freed slaves, bought a strip of land from a native chief at *Sierra Leone* ; † and three years later they obtained a charter of incorporation, and started the settlement at Freetown. Zachary Macaulay, the historian's father, was the first governor. The colony had not much success. But it represented a very different spirit from the earlier settlements on the West African coast, which had been purely stations for the slave trade. The humanitarian movement, of which we shall have more to say, was beginning to influence imperial policy.

Pitt's India Act.—Thus, in various ways, a fresh beginning was being made in British colonisation. A fresh beginning was also being made in India. Warren Hastings had solidly established the British power. But his experience had shown that the system of government established by North's Act of 1773 would not work. In 1784 Pitt carried an *India Act*, which fixed the main lines of the government of India in the form it retained until 1858. The

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*b*.
† See School Atlas, Plate 56*c*.

political power of the Directors was not abolished (as Fox had proposed in his Bill of the previous year), but a Government Board of Control was established which the Directors had to consult upon all questions of policy. Thus the British Government assumed ultimate responsibility for the government of British India, without sacrificing the knowledge and experience of the Directors. The Act also laid it down that there must be no meddling with Indian politics, and no treaties with Indian powers—an impossible provision, which could not be enforced.

Cornwallis in India.—Under this Act Lord Cornwallis * went out as Governor-General (1786–1793). He was the first Governor not drawn from the Company's service, and his high rank raised him above the jealousies of the service. He was able to carry much farther the work of reorganising the system of administration and justice which Hastings had begun. In spite of the India Act, he was drawn into a war with Tipu Sahib, a ferocious tyrant who had succeeded Hyder Ali upon the throne of Mysore. In conjunction with the Marathas and the Nizam, Cornwallis captured Tipu's capital, Seringapatam,† and deprived him of half of his territory, which was divided among the allies. Non-intervention in Indian politics was proved to be impossible. In two ways Cornwallis departed from Hastings' methods. Hastings had worked as much as possible through Indians ; Cornwallis laid down the principle that no Indian should be employed in any position of responsibility. Hastings, in fixing the land revenue (which was the chief source of revenue in India), had tried to ensure that the peasants and the Government should share the increased yield due to improved cultivation ; Cornwallis preferred to treat the *Zemindars*, or hereditary collectors of land revenue, as if they were landowners like the English squires. He therefore carried out, in 1793, a *Permanent Settlement* of the land revenues of Bengal, whereby the amount payable by each *Zemindar* was fixed for all time. This meant that the peasants were left very much at the mercy of the *Zemindars*, and that the Government derived no advantage from increased prosperity. Later experience has shown that this was a grave blunder, and that the methods of Hastings were far sounder, and more in accord with Indian usage. Nevertheless, the governorship of Cornwallis was

* There is a short Life of Cornwallis by W. S. Seton-Kerr (Rulers of India).
† See School Atlas, Plate 53*c*.

an important epoch in the history of British India. Building on the foundations laid by Hastings, he put an end to corruption and oppression, and made the British provinces models of good government for the rest of India.

3. The Humanitarian Movement

The Evangelicals.—If the character of the British Empire was changing, this was partly due to a change of spirit in the mother-country. The religious revival begun by the Wesleys had spread to all the Churches. The Dissenting Churches had regained some of their old fervour, and in the Church of England the Evangelical movement had got the upper hand. Its influence upon national policy became considerable : William Wilberforce, one of its leaders, was Pitt's most intimate friend.

Humanitarianism.—The religious revival led to a humanitarian movement, which expressed itself in many forms. Hospitals were founded in large numbers in every part of the country. The provision of education for the children of the poor began when Robert Raikes of Gloucester started a school for children engaged in industry, on Sunday—their only free day (1780). Soon all the Churches had taken up this work, and before the end of the century many of them had opened schools on weekdays also. These were only makeshift institutions ; but they were the beginning of the provision of education for the mass of the people. The cruelty of the penal system was exposed by John Howard, with whom began prison reform : the years from 1773 to 1790 were filled with his activities, and to him must be attributed the beginning of a more humane spirit in the treatment of prisoners.

Anti-Slave-Trade Movement.—But perhaps the most significant feature of the humanitarian movement was the agitation against the slave trade, which began with the foundation of the Abolition Society in 1787 by a group of Evangelicals and Quakers, led by Wilberforce. Hitherto no objection had been taken to this traffic. To obtain supremacy in it had been one of the aims of national policy, and the Asiento Treaty of 1714, which gave to British traders a monopoly of the importation of negro slaves into Spanish America, had been regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of British diplomacy. Vast fortunes had been made out of the slave trade ; and it might have seemed a hopeless enterprise to

persuade the nation to forbid so lucrative a traffic. Yet the victory was won in 1807, only twenty years after the movement started. It could not have been so quickly won if a real change had not been taking place in the nation's outlook.

The Somersett Case.—There can be little doubt that the humanitarian temper of the age largely influenced the famous judgment given by the Chief Justice, Lord Mansfield, in the Somersett Case (1772). Somersett was a negro slave who had been brought to England by his master, a ship's captain. On his behalf some of the enemies of slavery applied for a writ of *habeas corpus ;* and in giving his judgment on the application, Lord Mansfield laid it down that slavery was so odious and unnatural that unless there was a " positive law " permitting it, it must be held to be illegal. He therefore released the slave ; and from this date every slave became free on setting foot in England, or in any English colony in which " positive law " or established usage did not permit of slavery. It was for this reason that Canada later became the refuge of escaped slaves from the United States ; and it was because emancipated slaves had become numerous in London that the colony of Sierra Leone was started for them in 1788.

The Missionary Movement.—Ere long the religious and the humanitarian movements were to be blended in the missionary movement. In 1793 William Carey, a Baptist cobbler, started missionary activity in India. Before the end of the century a group of powerful missionary societies had been founded, and soon there were scores of British missionaries scattered over the backward regions of the world, supported by subscriptions at home. Their influence was to contribute very greatly to transform the character of the British Empire in the nineteenth century. Hitherto the attitude of the colonising peoples towards the backward peoples had been one of ruthless exploitation. The change in this attitude which was now coming about, and which was first shown in Grenville's attempt to protect the rights of Red Indians under the proclamation of 1763,* owed its origin to the religious and humanitarian movement, which was one of the most hopeful influences upon the life of the British peoples during this period of recuperation.

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* See above, p. 400.

4. The Industrial Revolution

Economic Changes.—Meanwhile profound changes were taking place in the economic life of the British peoples—changes which were to multiply almost indefinitely their power of creating wealth, and therefore the numbers of the population whom they could maintain. These changes were the beginning of an immense social revolution which was, in course of time, to transform the conditions of life throughout the world, and to render necessary a complete reconstruction of the social system. They had three aspects, which were closely related. There were changes in the methods of agriculture, changes in the methods of industry, and changes in the means of transport and communication.* Because these changes began in Britain, they vastly increased her resources, and enabled her to stand the strain of the coming conflict. But because nobody realised their significance, they created very grave social problems which nearly brought revolution after the strain of war was relieved.

Agricultural Advance.—At the beginning of the eighteenth century British agricultural methods were very much what they had been for centuries. But then began a period of scientific development. The methods of enriching the soil, the best ways of planting and hoeing, the rotation of crops, and the improvement of the breed of cattle and sheep, were all scientifically developed by various reformers. Among these Lord Townshend, Sir Robert Walpole's brother-in-law, earned a high place by the work he did in showing how a crop of turnips restored the soil after wheat, besides providing winter fodder. In the second half of the century scientific farming became a fashionable hobby, in which many great landowners, from the king downwards, took a keen interest ; and a school of agricultural writers, such as Arthur Young, did a great deal to spread this useful fashion.

The Enclosures.—But there was one great obstacle in the way of progress. The old open-field system still survived over more than half of the country. Under this system the lands of a township were divided into countless strips, belonging to different owners, which had to be cultivated on a common plan ; and a large proportion of the land was wasted, as fallow or in commons or in the "balks"

* For England before and after the Industrial Revolution, see School Atlas, Plate 41.

which separated the strips. The only way to give freedom of action to the progressive farmer was to "enclose" these lands. "Enclosure" was of two kinds, either the division of the open fields into consolidated blocks, which the holders could cultivate as they thought fit; or the apportionment of the untilled waste. Sometimes enclosure took place by agreement; but this was difficult to secure. In the reign of George III the quicker method of passing an Act of Parliament for the enclosure of this parish or that began to be used, and thousands of Enclosure Acts were passed, under the impetus of the agricultural enthusiasm of the period. The result was very greatly to increase the productive power of British land.

Effects of Enclosure.—This was not, however, the only result. The Enclosure Acts were mostly promoted by the big landowners, and were not always fair to the small man. Even when they were quite fair, the small man found it difficult to compete with his bigger neighbours, who had enough capital and knowledge to utilise the modern methods; the cost of fencing his new holding was often so heavy as to ruin him; and a few acres of enclosed land formed a poor substitute for the right of pasture on the waste. The result was that in thousands of cases the small man was forced to sell his land and to become a mere hired labourer. The big estates added field to field. The average size of farms increased. But the number of smallholders rapidly decreased. A wide gap, such as had not previously existed, was opened between the big landowners and the capitalist farmers on the one side, and the wage-earning labourers on the other; and the landowners ceased to be the natural leaders of the rural community, as they had been in the days when nearly all the members of that community had some interest in the land on which they worked.

Spinning Machinery.—In industry the great feature of the period was the introduction of power-driven machinery. This momentous change began in the Lancashire cotton industry, which had hitherto been unimportant because English operatives could neither spin nor weave as finely as the native workers in India, and could not produce a cotton thread firm enough to be used as warp; moreover, it took the work of five spinners to keep a weaver employed, and in these circumstances the industry could not easily expand. About 1764 James Hargreaves invented a "spinning-jenny" which enabled one worker to attend to a number of spindles at once; in 1769 Richard Arkwright patented the water-frame which spun a

hard yarn capable of being used as warp; and in 1779 Samuel Crompton invented a cross between the spinning-jenny and the water-frame (called a "mule") which combined many of the merits of both. The weavers could now be kept fully employed; and they were supplied with yarns so strong, fine, and cheap that they could beat the Indian manufacturer. The result was that the output of Lancashire was increased fourfold between 1775 and 1790, and British foreign trade received a stimulus which more than balanced the whole cost of the American war.

The Factory System.—As yet the weaving side of the industry remained a domestic industry, and the weavers enjoyed a period of very great prosperity. In 1785, indeed, Edmund Cartwright invented a power-loom; but it did not come into wide use for another twenty years. Spinning—first in cotton, then in wool—monopolised, to begin with, the new mechanical methods. The new machines had to be worked with power—at first water-power, later steam; they therefore concentrated in the hill-country where water-power could be got. They were most economical when a large number of machines were worked by the same head of water. Hence large factories came into existence, owned by men who possessed enough capital to build and equip them; and the work-people, instead of being their own masters, had to work for such wages as the employers could be got to pay.

Social Consequences.—The employers were mostly rough and uncultivated men who had risen from the ranks. Wages were generally low, and the hours of work were long. Nobody had yet realised the necessity of regulating the conditions of labour, or of protecting the weak against the strong, nor was there any machinery for doing so. In the Lancashire valleys, where suitable water-power could be got, a new population rapidly gathered. It was nobody's business to see that decent conditions were secured for them, and the new towns which were springing up in a hitherto thinly populated region were from the first ill-designed and unhealthy. As yet, however, these evil results of a great and fruitful development were not obvious. The wealth of the nation was being rapidly increased; but it was being increased at the cost of the health and well-being of a mass of workers who received a very small share of the wealth they created. The bulk of this wealth went to the new class of factory owners, and to the owners of the land on which the new factories and towns were springing up.

Iron and Coal.—During the same period the iron industries were also, like the textile trades, entering upon a new era. Hitherto the only method of smelting iron was by charcoal ; and the British iron-fields were being almost disused because of the exhaustion of the woods. In 1760 a new method of smelting iron with coal was for the first time successfully applied at the Carron works in Scotland. The result was to give an immense impetus to the iron trade, and, at the same time, to extend enormously the use of coal, hitherto employed only for domestic fires. The first iron bridge—across the Severn—was erected in 1779 : the age of iron had begun.

The Steam Engine.—And meanwhile the steam engine—long known in a crude form—underwent an immense improvement, thanks to the genius of James Watt, who began his work in this field in 1764, and was manufacturing steam engines at Birmingham from 1768. At first the steam engine was only used for pumping mines ; but it soon began to be turned to other purposes. The age of engineering, of steam and of coal had fairly begun. These tremendous new forces, which were to revolutionise the conditions of human life, were at first a British monopoly ; and the long wars which were soon to begin extended the period of this monopoly, because other countries, strained and ravaged by war, could not imitate these British inventions. Moreover, the command of these new and cheap commodities immeasurably increased the resources of Britain for foreign trade.

Roads and Canals.—These remarkable developments could not have taken place unless there had been a very great improvement in the methods of transport. Hitherto Britain had been far behind both France and Holland in the quality of her roads * and her waterways. During this period she began rapidly to make up this leeway. Her road system was immensely improved mainly by the creation of turnpikes, where tolls were collected for the upkeep of the roads. Her very limited navigable waterways were improved by deepening rivers and building locks ; they were extended by the construction of artificial canals. † The first of these was the Duke of Bridgewater's canal between Worsley and Manchester, begun in 1759 and later extended to the Mersey at Runcorn. Its effect may be indicated by the fact that a ton of goods, costing forty shillings to transport by

* For roads before the Industrial Revolution, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 27, fig. 40.

† For canals and navigable waterways, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 27, fig. 41.

road from Manchester to Liverpool, could be carried for six shillings by canal. Immense energy was being expended during this generation in the construction of "inland navigations"; and armies of "navigators" or "navvies" were at work, linking up the main centres of industry with the ports. By the end of the century over 2,000 miles of canals had been cut.

Effects of these Changes.—In all these ways the inventive genius and the energy of the British people were enormously increasing their capacity for the production of wealth. They were doubling the yield of their soil; they were finding ways of utilising their mineral wealth on a vastly increased scale; they were producing manufactured goods—textiles, pottery, metal work—in an abundance and at a price which no other country could rival. In comparison with the immense gains thus made, the losses caused by the American War were negligible, and even the terrific strain of the coming war was not too heavy to be borne. Britain was not at the close of her period of greatness, but at the opening of a more splendid period than she had ever known. But at the same time she was creating for herself new social problems of a kind for which human history provided no parallel.

5. The Revival of Intellectual Life

Poets and Novelists.—The age which showed so much energy in so many various fields was not less great in the creative arts. English poetry came alive again, after the long stagnation of the early eighteenth century. Gray, Goldsmith and Cowper all had a reality of poetic inspiration which had long been lacking. Burns' *Poems*, published in 1786, and Blake's *Songs of Innocence*, published in 1787, were the harbingers of the Romantic Revival which was to be the glory of the next generation. And a great new imaginative art, that of the novel, had sprung into being for the enrichment of life and the enlargement of human sympathy. The English novel had indeed begun in the first half of the century, with Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding; but the first thirty years of George III were illuminated by the work of Sterne, Smollett, Goldsmith, and Fanny Burney. In all of these alike humour, kindliness, and a large human sympathy were the outstanding notes. They were among the characteristics of a great age. Yet the characteristic figure of the age was neither a poet nor a novelist, but a great scholar

and critic, Samuel Johnson. He was yet greater as a man than as a writer ; and his living figure survives, more vividly than that of any other great man of the past, in the best of all biographies, Boswell's *Life of Johnson.*

The Fine Arts.—Not less remarkable was the achievement of the age in the fine arts, in which, hitherto, the British peoples had produced no great names. There has been no period of British art distinguished by greater names than those of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney, all of whom were at work in the first part of George III's reign. It was a great age also in the art of the theatre—the age of David Garrick, greatest of British actors, and of the comedies of Sheridan and Goldsmith.

Political Thought.—But perhaps the noblest work of the period was that which it produced in the study of human society. The great name of Burke,* one of the profoundest of political thinkers, would alone be enough to illustrate an era. But the seriousness with which the men of this generation were studying the problems of human society is perhaps best illustrated by the titles of three famous books, all published in the year of the American Declaration of Independence (1776)—Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Jeremy Bentham's *Fragment on Government*, and Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Adam Smith was the true founder of the science of political economy ; Bentham was the apostle of the school of scientific reform which was largely responsible for many of the most notable advances of the nineteenth century ; and these two, between them, did more than any other two men to mould the thinking of the next two generations. As for Gibbon, his book—the only piece of historical writing of that century which is still read and valued—was the first great exemplar of scientific history.

In short, the generation which preceded the French Revolution was full of vitality on every side of national life, and would have produced noble results even if that world-shaking event had never happened.

* There is an admirable short Life of Burke by John Morley (English Men of Letters).

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (1789–1801)

1. The Outbreak of the Revolution

Suddenness of the Outbreak.—Before Pitt had been five years in office, the French Revolution began (1789). It was not merely to distort his policy, it was to change the course of human history. But at first nobody anticipated these gigantic results, or foresaw that the Revolution was to lead to nearly a quarter of a century of world-wide war. As late as 1792 Pitt himself predicted fifteen years of peace, and showed the sincerity of his belief by cutting down both the army and the navy. Yet at the beginning of 1793 Britain was drawn into the vortex of a war which filled the rest of Pitt's life, and did not reach its close until ten years after his death.

Causes of the Revolution.—The French Revolution was a revolt against absolute monarchy, and still more against the privileges of class and caste which were rooted in the traditions of every European country. It began in France because France was more prosperous and progressive than other European countries; because, since Louis XIV, the French monarchy had become inefficient and had led the nation to humiliation and almost to bankruptcy; and because the educated classes in France were impregnated with the ideas of philosophers like Rousseau, who challenged the whole existing order and taught that well-being and liberty could be secured by political changes. But it had echoes in almost every European country. Everywhere peoples were ready to throw off the shackling relics of feudalism. This was why the Revolution was not merely an event in French history; but marked an epoch in the history of the world.

The States-General.—The finances of France were in hopeless confusion, especially since the American War; and in the hope of getting help to put them right, King Louis XVI summoned the States-General—a sort of Parliament of three Houses: Nobles, Clergy, and Commons—which had not met since 1614. The summons of the States-General stirred all the grievances and all the aspirations which had been fermenting in the minds of the French people, and during the months before its meeting all classes in every

part of the country were drawing up statements of grievances and projects of redress. Practically the whole nation was united in the resolve to create a new and better order. No assembly in history has ever met with higher hopes or more generous aspirations than filled the States-General when its sessions were opened at Versailles in May 1789. And in all countries this inspiring spectacle of a whole nation setting forth to achieve freedom and justice awakened warm sympathy. The watching world was thrilled. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven"—so Wordsworth wrote as he looked back upon this great moment long afterwards. The great adventure went wrong. But even the horrors which followed, and the long ravages of war, did not destroy the influence of the Revolution upon the minds and hearts of men.

Rapid Development.—Once the Revolution was launched, its progress was extremely rapid. First the Third Estate, declining to be limited by the other two, declared itself a National Assembly and swore not to break up until it had made a new constitution. The king had to assent, and the destruction of all the old institutions of France and the creation of new ones occupied the next two years: beginning with an exalted Declaration of the Rights of Man. The most remarkable moment in this work came on August 4th, 1789, when, amid scenes of fervent emotion, the old privileges of class were swept away, with the assent of the privileged classes. This was the greatest, and the most permanent, achievement of the Revolution. It was won without violence. Meanwhile, on July 14th, the Paris mob, alarmed because the king was collecting troops, had stormed the frowning fortress of the Bastille. The fall of the Bastille was universally recognised as a symbol of the end of absolutism; but it was also the beginning of mob-rule. In October the Paris mob forced the king and the Assembly to move from Versailles to Paris; and thereafter the excitable mob, swayed by fanatical orators, controlled everything. But France was rapidly falling into chaos. The old authorities were destroyed or discredited; the new elected bodies, lacking experience, were unable to govern. There were sporadic peasant risings, and burnings of châteaux. Discipline was destroyed in the army and the navy. Things got so bad that in June 1791, the poor, weak, well-meaning king tried to run away, as many of the nobles had already done; but he was stopped at Varennes, and brought back as a prisoner.

Violence and War.—In September 1791, the new constitution

was completed. It was an experiment in complete democracy. Everybody was to be elected. But from the first it would not work. The confusion became worse and worse. The new Legislative Assembly, which took the place of the National Assembly, could not govern. In the hope of pulling things together, and arousing national patriotism, the revolutionary government plunged into war against Austria and Prussia (1792). But when foreign armies crossed the frontiers, a wild panic broke out in Paris. It was used for their own purpose by the extremist leaders. A hideous and cold-blooded massacre of royalists and others in the Paris prisons was organised (September 1792) : it shocked the friends of the Revolution in other countries. The extremists had now got the upper hand. All hope of a peaceful reconstruction was at an end. Meanwhile the war was going surprisingly well for the infant republic. Belgium and Western Germany, being as ripe for revolution as France itself, welcomed the undisciplined French levies. The revolutionary leaders persuaded themselves that the armies of liberty were unconquerable. In their enthusiasm they resolved to rouse the whole world for democracy, and in November 1792 they declared war "against all kings and on behalf of all peoples." In January 1793, the unhappy King Louis XVI was sent to the guillotine. Not content with the existing war against Austria and Prussia, France declared war against Britain and Holland in February, and against Spain in March. All the powers of Europe were challenged either to destroy the Republic or to imitate its methods.

Britain Drawn In.—Thus a sudden change had come over the situation. Until the summer of 1792 it had seemed that the chief result of the Revolution would be to reduce France to anarchy, so that she would no longer count in European affairs. But the September massacres, the spread of the Revolution into Belgium and Western Germany, and the deposition and execution of the king, put a graver complexion upon the situation. A fiery challenge had been thrown down to the whole existing order of things. It had to be accepted. Pitt had been very loth to contemplate the possibility of war. His hand was forced when the French, being at the moment masters of Belgium, declared the Scheldt an open river in defiance of treaties, and prepared to attack Holland. War would have come on this issue in any event. But it was France, not Britain, that actually declared war. It has been sometimes said that the monarchies of Europe were responsible for the long wars, because

they would not leave the Revolution to work itself out. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The most gigantic struggle that the world had yet seen was deliberately precipitated by the revolutionary leaders.

2. The Influence of the French Revolution in Britain

The British Reformers.—The beginnings of the French Revolution were almost universally welcomed in Britain. Among the advocates of parliamentary reform, in particular, who had been damped by Pitt's easy abandonment of their cause, it aroused a genuine enthusiasm, and for a while the democratic agitation became more vigorous than ever in Britain. Societies for constitutional reform sprang up all over the country, the most remarkable being the London Corresponding Society, founded by a London bootmaker with a subscription of a penny a week. Many of those societies started correspondence with the political clubs which had sprung into being in every French town. The correspondence was perfectly innocent —full of vague enthusiasm about the advance of two great nations to liberty. It came to an end with the September massacres. Later all this interchange of letters was regarded as proof that there had been a widespread conspiracy for the reproduction of all the excesses of the French Revolution in England, but there was no justification for this charge.

Burke and Paine.—The current of opinion began to turn when mob-violence got the upper hand in Paris. At the end of 1790 Burke published his *Reflections on the French Revolution*,* and the appearance of this profound and eloquent book was a political event of the greatest importance. Hitherto all the enthusiasm had been on the side of the advocates of revolution; Burke awakened an equal enthusiasm for the protection of old and hallowed institutions. There were many replies to Burke; but the most important was the *Rights of Man* (1791), by Tom Paine, a clear, cocksure, trenchant exposition of the revolutionary creed. It had a wide circulation in Britain, but the extreme character of the views which it expressed alarmed many, and hastened the reaction. After the September massacres of 1792 and the execution of Louis XVI, opinion in Britain swung violently round, against the revolution, and even the

* There are many editions of this great book. It is included in Everyman's Library and in the World's Classics.

most ardent of parliamentary reformers ceased to have any dealings with the French.

Persecution of Reformers.—This change of opinion had important results. It brought about a split in the Whig party; many of the Whigs, led by Burke, joined Pitt, while Fox, who still believed in the Revolution, though he deplored its excesses, was left with only a handful of followers. More important, the Government, sharing in the popular panic, persuaded itself that the advocates of reform were revolutionaries and seditionists in disguise, and began a ferocious persecution of them. In 1793 a convention was held by the Scottish reformers in Edinburgh, to consider how reform could be forwarded "by rational and lawful means." Some of the leaders of this movement—moderate and public-spirited men—were actually prosecuted for treason, and four of them were transported as convicts to Australia. In England similar prosecutions were started against a dozen leading advocates of reform. One of them (Horne Tooke) subpœnaed Pitt, to prove that the Prime Minister himself had advocated, ten years earlier, the very measures for advocating which his victims were now being tried for their lives (1794). London juries refused to find verdicts against the accused, and the prosecutions broke down. But in the next year (1795) very severe Acts were passed restricting the liberty of speech and of the Press, and in 1799 all the societies for the forwarding of parliamentary reform were suppressed by law. It is a shadow upon the reputation of Pitt that he should have lent himself to so grave a restriction of the traditional liberties of his country. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the sentiment of the country supported him in this policy of repression. Thus, for Britain, the chief result of the French Revolution was a serious reaction, and a great setback to the promising movement for political reform which had been gradually growing in strength.

3. The First Coalition and its Downfall (1793–1795)

Opening of the War.—The first phase of the French Revolutionary War, which extended from 1793 to 1795, saw the Republic surrounded by a ring of enemies, while within her own borders a formidable royalist rebellion raged in the province of La Vendée, on the coast of the Bay of Biscay, and other revolts against the revolutionary government broke out in various parts of the country. Toulon even admitted a British and Spanish fleet, which took

possession of that great arsenal. On any reasonable calculation, the Republic ought to have been overwhelmed in the first campaigns. And this nearly happened. The complete disorganisation of the French army was revealed. Austrian and British forces drove the French pell-mell out of Belgium, and the road to Paris seemed to lie open, while other enemy forces crossed the frontier in every direction.

French Triumphs in 1793–1794.—But by an extraordinary effort the Republic held its own, and beat back its enemies: in all history there is nothing of its kind that surpasses the French effort of 1793 and 1794. A Committee of Public Safety was set up, with powers more absolute than Louis XIV had ever wielded. A Reign of Terror was instituted, which lasted from March 1793, to June 1794; droves of victims were sent to the scaffold, and every element of resistance was crushed out. A man of genius, Carnot, "the Organiser of Victory," took the army in hand, and moulded it into a superb fighting instrument. France became one great arsenal, and compulsory military service was instituted. By the end of the year the invaders had everywhere been driven over the frontier. In 1794 the triumphant republicans pursued them, reconquered Belgium, overran Holland, captured the Dutch fleet by sending a cavalry force across the frozen waters, and drove both the British and the Austrian armies into ignominious retreat.

Defective Naval Policy.—This amazing reversal of fortune was mainly due to the irresistible *élan* of the French. But it was made easy by the quarrels of the allies, and by the futility with which their affairs were managed. For this Pitt must share the blame. He had nothing of his father's genius for war. He failed to use the British navy—which, in combination with the Dutch and the Spanish fleets, was quite irresistible—to the best advantage. Instead of closely blockading the French ports, he too readily allowed exit to the French fleet. The only important naval battle of this period of the war—the "glorious *First of June*" (1794)*—was a result of this neglect. A convoy of corn-ships was coming from America to France. The French fleet came out from Brest to guard it. Admiral Howe severely defeated the French fleet, but during the fighting the corn-ships got safely to harbour. If Brest had been

* For the naval battles of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28, fig. 42.

effectively blockaded there would have been no battle, but the corn-ships would have been captured. Again, Pitt failed to use the power which naval supremacy gave to Britain, of landing troops at any point on the coast where they might be useful. A force landed in this way might have made a vast difference to the rising in La Vendée, but no aid was sent until too late. An adequate force might have held the great arsenal of Toulon ; but the troops sent were too few, and a French army (which included a young French artillery officer, Napoleon Buonaparte, who now made his first appearance on the pages of history), was able to recapture the place with little difficulty. Finally, the British military forces were dissipated in too many directions. The biggest forces were sent to the West Indies, where they were decimated by yellow fever in a useless campaign in San Domingo.

Breakdown of the Coalition.—By 1795 the triumphs of the Republic were so great that the formidable coalition against her was broken up. Holland became a subject-ally of France, under a republican government, and declared war against Britain. Spain also made peace with France, and in 1796 concluded an offensive and defensive alliance against Britain. Prussia concluded a humiliating peace at Basel, whereby she recognised French possession of all Western Germany up to the Rhine ; * she deserted her allies because she was anxious to share in the last partition of Poland, † which took place in that year. Thanks to the gross mismanagement of overwhelming superiority, the most powerful coalition of European powers that had ever been formed had been broken up in less than three years. Only Britain, Austria, and the little Italian States remained in arms against the triumphant Republic, and the preponderance of power was now on the side of France. Even on the seas, a combination of France, Spain, and Holland menaced British naval supremacy. Pitt himself strove to make peace. But France would not listen. Her first enthusiasm for liberty had waned. She was now under the control of a knot of corrupt and cynical politicians, the Directory, who inherited much of the power of the Committee of Public Safety. She had tasted the glory and profit of conquest.

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* For France, Central and Western Europe after the Treaty of Basel, see the larger Atlas, Plate 57 ; and also for Germany, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 21, fig. 22.

† See School Atlas, Plate 29*b*.

She now entered upon a new stage of her development, in which not liberty but dominion was the aim of her rulers. And as her chief foe she had marked down Britain, who had beaten her in the wars of the eighteenth century.

4. The Dark Years (1795–1798)

Efforts for Peace.—The three years from 1795 to 1798 were among the most anxious and critical in the history of the British peoples. Three times, during these years, Pitt offered peace to France. He was willing to recognise the Republic's continental conquests, and to restore the islands which had been conquered from her in the West Indies. These offers were refused by the militant republic, whose appetite for conquest had become insatiable.

The Danger of Invasion.—In 1796 France planned an invasion, with an army of 15,000 veterans led by Lazare Hoche, the ablest of the republican generals. Ireland was at that moment on the verge of rebellion (see p. 479), and if the French army had landed, Ireland would almost certainly have been lost. A French fleet, with the army aboard, got out from Brest, and even reached the coast of Ireland in safety (December 1796). Only the accident of a fog and a storm prevented a landing. Luck rather than skill preserved Britain on this occasion. And in February 1797, a small French force actually landed at Fishguard in South Wales. It was easily dispersed, but the fact that it was able to land at all was alarming: it meant that the shield of the navy was not being rightly employed. Meanwhile (1796) the British fleet had to evacuate the Mediterranean, because it was not strong enough to face the combined French and Spanish fleets.

Napoleon in Italy.—During 1796 and the early part of 1797, however, the main strength of France was thrown not against Britain but against Austria. In 1796 the conquering career of Napoleon began. He was given command, at the age of twenty-seven, of an army which was to invade Italy, while two other French armies were sent to attack Austria across Southern Germany. Napoleon's dazzling campaign in Italy marked him as one of the greatest soldiers of all time, and gave to France the mastery of Northern Italy.* In the spring of 1797 he pressed on towards

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 19, fig. 19.

Vienna, and forced Austria to accept a humiliating peace, which left France practically mistress of Italy. *

Britain's Danger.—Britain now stood alone, exposed to all the strength of the formidable Republic. Ireland was ready for revolt, with 200,000 men secretly drilling. The victorious armies of France were free for an invasion of England or Ireland. Like the armies of Philip II two centuries before, they needed only to have the sea safely held until they could be ferried over. And for this purpose the fleets of Spain and Holland could now be added to those of France. If they could make a junction they might be strong enough to sweep the Channel fleet aside.

Cape St. Vincent.—In February 1797, the Mediterranean fleet of Spain came out through the Straits of Gibraltar. Watching the exit was Admiral Jervis, with fifteen battleships against the Spaniard's twenty-five. Second in command to Jervis was a young admiral, Horatio Nelson,† who was now to get his first great opportunity : it is a dramatic coincidence that the supreme genius of sea-warfare should have emerged almost at the same moment as the supreme genius of land warfare, whom he was to baffle. Off Cape St. Vincent, Jervis attacked the Spanish fleet, and broke the line. But the main body would have escaped if Nelson, disregarding orders, had not thrown himself against the head of the Spanish line and prevented its escape. Four Spanish ships were captured ; the rest retreated tamely to Cadiz, where they were watched by a blockading squadron. The Battle of Cape St. Vincent checkmated the first move of the enemy.

Naval Mutinies.—But the French and the Dutch fleets had still to be dealt with, and it was they which were charged with the duty of transporting the invading army. The Channel fleet was watching the French ; the North Sea fleet, under Duncan, was watching the Dutch. The very existence of Britain seemed to depend upon these fleets. And at this moment mutiny broke out in both—first in the Channel fleet, at Spithead ; later, and more seriously, in the North Sea fleet, at the Nore. The sailors had very good reasons for discontent. They were largely recruited by the brutal methods of the press-gang ; and they were badly paid and often

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 19, fig. 18.

† Southey's *Life of Nelson* is a sort of classic : it is included in Everyman's Library. There is a short modern Life by J. K. Laughton (English Men of Action). Mahan's *Life of Nelson* is the standard authority.

very badly treated. At Spithead they put forward reasonable demands, which were granted after unreasonable delay, and they returned readily to duty on the appeal of "Black Dick" Howe, the most popular of Nelson's predecessors. But at the Nore the mutiny, led by a midshipman named Parker, had a revolutionary character. For a time the mutineers actually blockaded the Thames.

Camperdown.—The whole of Duncan's fleet, except two vessels, left their station, where they were blockading the Dutch fleet, and Duncan was reduced to desperate devices to avoid betraying his weakness to the enemy. Only the fortunate accident that adverse winds kept the Dutch in the Texel prevented them from coming out to make a junction with the French and transport an army to Ireland. Happily the mutineers had returned to duty before the Dutch set sail (October); and in the hard-fought battle of *Camperdown* they won so decisive a victory that the Dutch fleet never put out to sea again.

St. Vincent and Camperdown between them removed the danger of invasion, and definitely re-established British naval supremacy. The project of invasion was not, indeed, abandoned; the French government appointed Napoleon to the command of the "army of England." But when Napoleon surveyed the situation, he felt that there was no glory to be won in this field, and advised that the best point at which to attack the British power was the East.

Napoleon in Egypt.—In May 1798, therefore, Napoleon set sail from Toulon, with a fine army and a great fleet, upon an expedition to Egypt. He seized Malta (which belonged to the Knights of St. John) and, landing at Alexandria, rapidly made himself master of Egypt—with whose rulers France had no quarrel. Egypt was to be the base for a later attack upon India, and this threat, as we shall see (p. 483 below), had a very important influence upon the development of the British Empire in India.

The Nile and Acre.—After the naval victories of 1797 the British Government had once more sent a fleet into the Mediterranean, and given the command to Nelson—his first independent command. He had missed the French fleet on its way to Egypt. But he descended upon it where it lay at anchor in *Aboukir Bay* (August 1798),* while Napoleon was lording it at Cairo, and completely annihilated the whole fleet in what was popularly known as

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 29, fig. 43.

"the Battle of the Nile." The result was that Napoleon was imprisoned in Egypt, where he was certain to be attacked by the Turks. To forestall this attack, he advanced into Syria, but was checked at *Acre*, largely by the aid of a British squadron under Sir Sydney Smith (1799). A little later he had to defend himself against a Turkish attack. Having done that, he slipped back to France, leaving the imprisoned army behind him.

The First French Disaster.—In 1801 the deserted army, and the French power in Egypt, were destroyed by a British force landed from the sea, which defeated the French at *Aboukir*, while another force from India co-operated with a Turkish army in the reconquest of Egypt. This was the first serious disaster which the French had had to endure. It was made possible by sea-power. Napoleon had received his first experience of the force that was to destroy him.

5. The Second Coalition (1798–1801)

Formation of the Coalition.—During Napoleon's absence in Egypt, Pitt was able to organise a new coalition against France. In 1798 the French Directory occupied Switzerland without a shadow of justification, and extended its power over the whole of Italy by annexing Piedmont and creating dependent republics in Rome and Naples : * only Sicily remained free, because it was an island, and (thanks to the power of the British navy) French aggression could nowhere extend beyond low-water mark. These high-handed acts challenged resistance ; and the absence of Napoleon encouraged it. Austria and Russia made an alliance with Britain, who once more took up the rôle of pay-mistress.

Early Successes.—A joint plan of attack was devised. A combined British and Russian force was to reconquer Holland, and a combined Austrian and Russian force was to reconquer Italy, while the Austrians drove back the French in Germany. The campaign in Holland, under the Duke of York, was a humiliating failure, like every other British expedition sent out by Pitt : its only useful result was the destruction of the remnants of the Dutch fleet. But the campaigns in Germany and (still more) in Italy were much more successful. The French were driven out of Italy, and were being

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 19, fig. 18.

beaten back through the mountains of Switzerland, when they succeeded in checking the Russian advance at Zürich (September 1799).

Napoleon in Power.—At this moment Napoleon slipped back from Egypt. The Directory had long been unpopular in France, and the disasters of 1799 had still further undermined its power. In this situation Napoleon saw the chance of securing his own power. By a *coup d'état*, in November 1799, he overthrew the directorate and set up a new constitution, under which executive power was entrusted to three Consuls. Napoleon himself became First Consul and practically dictator ; and France willingly accepted his rule, and abandoned her dreams of political liberty.

Collapse of the Coalition.—Next year, 1800, Napoleon threw himself at the Austrians in Italy,* crossing the Great St. Bernard Pass, which no army had ever crossed before, and thus getting to the rear of the main Austrian army, which he defeated at Marengo. A little later another French army won a crushing victory over the Austrians in Germany, at Hohenlinden ; and Austria, beaten to her knees, was forced to accept the humiliating Treaty of Lunéville (1801). Meanwhile the eccentric Tsar Paul of Russia, who had conceived a warm admiration for Napoleon, had not only concluded peace, but had made an alliance with France against Britain.

New Danger to Britain.—Once again, therefore, a powerful European coalition had been shattered ; and once again Britain was left to withstand the might of France alone. Napoleon made plans for the invasion of England. But for this purpose he needed additional naval strength. He saw a chance of getting it by stirring up again the anger of the neutral powers against the restrictions on their trade imposed by Britain. Under the leadership of Tsar Paul, the Armed Neutrality of 1780 (above, p. 417) was reconstituted ; Denmark and Sweden joined it, and threatened to exclude British trade from the Baltic ; and there was a chance of using their fleets, as well as that of Russia, to reinforce the French fleets.

Copenhagen.—The British Government, however, struck promptly and hard. A fleet was sent to Copenhagen, under Sir Hyde Parker, with Nelson second in command, to demand that Denmark should withdraw her threat. The Danish Government refused ; whereupon Nelson, disregarding the dilatory methods of

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 19, fig. 19.

his chief, attacked the Danish fleet, which was anchored under the guns of Copenhagen,* sank or took most of the ships, silenced the batteries, and threatened to bombard the city. The Danish Government yielded, and abandoned the Armed Neutrality (April 1801). A little later Tsar Paul of Russia was assassinated; his successor, Alexander I, promptly made terms with Britain, and the Armed Neutrality ceased to exist.

The Treaty of Amiens.—Thus baffled, a second time, by sea-power, Napoleon decided to make peace. He wanted time to organise his power and to consolidate his empire. The British Government had always been eager for peace. Pitt had just gone out of office, for reasons which will be noted in the next chapter. His successor, Addington, negotiated the *Treaty of Amiens*, whereby each side undertook to restore its conquests. This meant that Britain gave back to France her West Indian islands; France had nothing to give back, for she had conquered nothing from Britain. There were many who hoped that France had now settled down after her revolutionary frenzy, and that the peace might be a lasting one. It was to prove no more than a truce: war was soon to be resumed, no longer against revolution, but against the ambition of the greatest conqueror who has ever played a part in history. But the close of the first phase of this long and desperate struggle affords a stopping-place at which it will be possible to consider what effects had been produced upon the life of the British people by the first eight years of war.

CHAPTER XXXVII

EFFECTS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY WAR UPON THE BRITISH PEOPLES

1. Social Effects in Britain

All great wars deeply affect the life of the peoples who take part in them. But the influence of the French Revolutionary War upon the British peoples was especially deep, because it came upon them at a very critical stage in their development.

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 29, fig. 44.

Financial Crisis.—We have already seen (p. 466) how the war stopped a promising movement of constitutional reform in Britain. By persuading the ruling classes to identify all change with revolution, it caused the postponement of necessary changes for forty years. The social effects of the war were equally serious. In the first place it caused a financial crisis. In the critical year 1797 there was so much insecurity that there was a run on the Bank of England, which would have failed if Pitt had not, in a single night, rushed through an Act cancelling the obligation to make cash payments, and making the notes of the Bank legal tender. It was not until 1819 that cash payments were resumed. The result was that the value of money (not being fixed in relation to gold) fell, or, in other words, prices rose. This was advantageous to a small class, who made rapid fortunes. But it inflicted great hardships upon the mass of the people, for wages did not rise in proportion to the rise of prices.

Shortage of Food.—A second result of the war was even more serious. Owing to the rapid increase of the population of Britain since 1750, the country was unable to feed itself: it needed to import about one-fifth of its foodstuffs, mainly from Poland and eastern Europe. But the war made these supplies more difficult to get, and more expensive; and in some years, when there were bad harvests at home, there was a serious shortage of food. The price of wheat rose very rapidly: by the end of the century a loaf of bread cost three times as much as it had cost fifty years before; and this inflicted great suffering upon the poorer classes, whose wages did not rise in proportion. The Government tried to meet the difficulty by encouraging the production of more food at home. For this purpose it passed Corn Laws, forbidding the importation of corn until the price of home-grown corn had reached a certain level. These had very little effect; but they created the belief that the price of food was being artificially raised.

Rapid Enclosures.—More important, the urgency of the need, and the high prices obtainable for corn, gave an immense stimulus to the enclosure movement and the development of scientific agriculture. Landowners and farmers were generally exceedingly prosperous. But, as we have seen, the result of wholesale enclosures was to crush out of existence the small farmer and the cottager with a little land. They sank to be merely wage-earning labourers, and because the competition for work was very keen, wages ruled very

low. At the same time, the growth of spinning machinery was depriving the cottager's wife and daughters of the chance of adding to the family income by their spinning-wheels. The result was that the general diffusion of comfort which had been one of the features of English life in the early part of the eighteenth century disappeared ; and a great gulf was opened between the prosperous landowners and farmers, who were richer than they had ever been, and the labouring class, who were generally worse off than they had ever been.

Poor Law Policy.—The distress was so great, and the level of wages was so inadequate to support life, that the Poor Law authorities began to make grants from the rates to supplement wages in proportion to the number of the labourer's children. This practice was begun, in 1795, by the magistrates of Berkshire after a meeting at Speenhamland ; it spread so rapidly that people spoke of the "Speenhamland Act," as if the practice had been enforced by Parliament. However well intended, this practice was wholly mischievous in its effects. It discouraged a rise of wages : why should the farmer pay more when the ratepayer would meet part of his wages bill for him ? It encouraged large families : the more children a labourer had the more money he got. It pauperised the working population wherever it was applied. It was cruelly unfair to the smallholder, who had to contribute in rates towards the wages of the big farmer whose competition was ruining him. Worst of all, it practically enslaved part of the population. The Poor Law Authorities had power to put recipients of relief to work. Often they hired them out in gangs, at a low price, to the farmers, supplementing this inadequate payment from the rates. But the cruellest aspect of this practice was that under it thousands of children were "apprenticed" to distant factories—taken from their poor homes at eight or even five years of age to work for long hours in the ugly northern towns, friendless, hopeless, and without tendance.

Restriction of Markets.—The war also had an unhappy effect upon the new industrial system which was growing up. For one thing, it prevented any attempt to ensure that the new towns which were springing up were properly governed, decently built, and made fit to be the homes of a great people. And it also increased the sufferings which were in any case bound to be caused by the introduction of mechanical production. The quantity of goods produced was being rapidly increased—so rapidly that enlarged markets were needed if the machines were not to be the cause of

serious unemployment ; and the war prevented the natural expansion of markets which would have taken place in time of peace.

Prohibition of Trade Unions.—Finally, there was no supervision of the conditions under which labour was employed, and no means of ensuring that adequate wages were paid. The workers soon began to form themselves into little clubs, or embryo Trade Unions, to gain strength in dealing with their employers. But because of the atmosphere created by the French Revolution, these combinations were regarded as dangerous and revolutionary. In 1799 and 1800 Parliament passed two Acts, known as the *Combination Acts*, which forbade all trade combinations under severe penalties, and treated them as unlawful conspiracies. Thus while the State refused to protect the working class against unfair treatment, it also refused to allow them to protect themselves.

In many ways, then, the War of the French Revolution brought great suffering to the mass of the British people, and greatly increased the difficulties which would in any case have resulted from the profound economic changes that were taking place. Things were not by any means as bad, during the first part of the war, as they became later, during the crisis of the grim struggle against Napoleon. But they were already bad enough. The fathers and mothers of the men who fought at Trafalgar and Waterloo—who themselves were often very harshly used—were undergoing an ordeal as bitter as that which their sons had to endure. And the struggle against revolution was bringing about a cleavage between the rich and prosperous classes and the poor and suffering classes in Britain which was later to make a British Revolution seem almost as inevitable as the French Revolution had been.

2. Ireland : '98 and the Union

Ireland since 1782.—The effects of the French Revolution and the war were most cruelly felt in Ireland, where everything turns to tragedy. Since the last years of the American War, Ireland had enjoyed freedom of trade and legislative independence. She was more prosperous than she had ever been. The old religious bitterness was dying down. The cruel social disabilities of the Catholics had been swept away ; and although they were still excluded from political rights, there was a large body of opinion among the Protestants which was in favour of equal rights. This improved temper, however,

had not spread to the peasantry. From 1784 onwards there were frequent faction-fights between rival gangs, the (Protestant) Peep o' Day Boys and the (Catholic) Defenders ; and agrarian outrages were frequent. Great reforms were needed in the economic system. But the now independent Parliament was not likely to carry them out, nor was it likely to do justice to the Catholics. It was still controlled by a little group of corrupt borough-owners, who were not in the least likely to destroy their own power. And because of this, Ireland was still—in spite of legislative independence—under the effective control of the British Government. For the British Government still disposed of all posts, pensions, and peerages, and by these means was able, as a rule, to buy the support of the Irish oligarchy.

The United Irishmen.—The coming of the French Revolution profoundly affected this situation. At first, revolutionary ideas had no welcome among the Catholics. But they were eagerly taken up by the Protestants of Ulster. It was in Ulster that the revolutionary and anti-English movement had its start. In 1791 a young Belfast lawyer, Wolfe Tone, published a vigorous pamphlet in which he argued that the British Government was the main obstacle to all reform in Ireland, and that Irishmen of both faiths should unite to throw off the British yoke. The Society of United Irishmen was founded for this purpose, in Belfast ; and it got into secret relations with the French revolutionary leaders : in 1794 Wolfe Tone had to flee the country. Meanwhile the Defender movement was spreading among the Irish peasantry. Midnight outrages, and affrays between Catholics and Protestants, were becoming more common : in 1795 this ugly violence was raging over half of Ireland. It had nothing to do, as yet, with the United Irishmen, but it frightened the Protestants and prevented most of them from joining the United Irish movement.

Imperfect Conciliation.—Pitt believed that the Catholics might prove to be the best safeguard against revolution. To win their favour, in 1793, he compelled the controlling oligarchy in the Irish Parliament to confer the franchise upon Catholics. He thus showed that the British Government did in fact control the Irish Parliament. The Act, however, while it gave Catholics the right to vote, did not give them the right to sit in Parliament. It therefore alienated the Catholic gentry, and prevented their influence from being felt. In the next year, 1794, Lord Fitzwilliam (one of the

Burke section of Whigs) was sent over as Lord-Lieutenant. He was known to be an advocate of complete Catholic emancipation, and his coming awakened high hopes. But six weeks after his arrival he was suddenly recalled. This undid all the good that had been done. It drove the Catholics into the arms of the United Irishmen, who themselves admitted that their cause had made no progress until the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam. This was one of the most disastrous of Pitt's blunders. Just at the moment when the first coalition had failed, and when Britain was about to be left to face France alone, a stimulus was given to the revolutionary movement in Ireland.

Preparations for Revolt.—In 1795 the United Irishmen began to join forces with the Defenders. United Irish Lodges sprang up in great numbers in southern Ireland. The conspirators began secret arming and drilling. Government passed an Insurrection Act, and suspended *Habeas Corpus*, but it was of no avail. There were secret negotiations with France for an invasion, and in December 1796 (see p. 469), a great French fleet nearly succeeded in landing a large army on the south coast of Ireland. During 1797 the drilling went on ; it was estimated that there were 200,000 men in arms in that year. That was the year when the French, Spanish, and Dutch fleets were available to transport a new French army to Ireland. It was the year of the naval mutinies. It was the most anxious year in British history.

Disarmament of Ulster.—To guard against the impending peril, the Irish government commissioned General Lake to disarm Ulster, where the United Irish movement had been strongest. The work was largely done by Protestant yeomanry, recruited in the district, who had had their experience of faction-fights, and were almost frantic with fear and hate. Grim and cruel deeds were done, but Ulster was disarmed. The rest of Ireland heard the story ; it did not lose in the telling. The United Irish leaders decided that a rising must take place before it was too late. They fixed it for 1798, still hoping for French aid ; but St. Vincent and Camperdown had made French aid on a large scale impossible, and Napoleon had reached that conclusion and gone off to Egypt before the rising broke out.

United Irish Organisation.—The organisation of the United Irishmen was by this time very elaborate. A network of Lodges covered the country ; they were directed by secret "barony"

committees, and these in their turn by secret "provincial" committees, with a national executive at the head of all, whose membership was not even known to the rank and file. All this was very impressive; but the worst of it was that if the secret controlling body disappeared, nobody would know that it had gone. In March 1798, Government, well posted by its spies, seized the Leinster executive, proclaimed martial law in Leinster, and started disarming that province. Even worse cruelties than those of Ulster took place. The result was that the revolt was precipitated in May 1798. But it was leaderless, because the leaders had been seized—among them Lord Edward Fitzgerald, son of the premier peer of Ireland, a very generous-minded but reckless young man.

The Rebellion of '98.—The rebellion of 1798 was a pitiful business—a blind rising of ignorant and terrified peasants, who perpetrated horrible outrages where they got the upper hand. But it was serious only in south-eastern Leinster, and especially in Wexford. In June, at *Vinegar Hill*, where they had formed an entrenched camp, the bewildered and desperate rebels were scattered and decimated. Savage repression followed; and Ireland was again subjugated. In August and September, when all was over, French forces at last reached Ireland. A little force landed at Killala, on the west coast, and routed a force of militia at Castlebar; but it was surrounded and forced to surrender by Lord Cornwallis, now Lord-Lieutenant. A French fleet, with an army, also came to Lough Swilly; but it could do nothing. Wolfe Tone, who came with it, was captured and committed suicide; that was the epilogue of the tragic story of '98.*

The Problem of Settlement.—The difficulty of reaching a settlement after all these miseries was very great. If the Protestant ascendancy was left to wield uncontrolled power, it was likely to misuse its power as it had done after the revolution of 1689. For the sake of the Catholics, in a large degree, Pitt and Cornwallis came to the conclusion that the only possible solution was a legislative union with England, and they hoped—and, indeed, promised—that it would be followed by a measure of complete Catholic emancipation. But the Union had to be adopted by the Irish Parliament; and neither the Irish borough-owners, who found their power profitable, nor the reformers like Grattan, who had hoped to use the

* For Ireland, see School Atlas, Plate 39*b*.

Parliament as a means of reform, would willingly agree to terminate its existence. The thing had to be done by the grossest bribery; £1,200,000 in money and a vast number of peerages and places had to be distributed among the members. "I despise and hate myself every hour," Cornwallis wrote, "for engaging in such dirty work; and am only supported by the reflection that without a Union the British Empire must be dissolved."

The Union and its Failure.—The Act of Union gave to Ireland 102 members of the House of Commons, and 45 representative peers. But almost all Irishmen—Protestants even more than Catholics—hated the necessity of giving up the symbol of national life. What did they get in return? The Scots had received freedom of trade throughout the British Empire, and this had reconciled them, and made the Union seem worth while; but Ireland had already received freedom of trade, in 1780. One thing alone, if it had been granted as a result of Union, might have reconciled the Irish people—religious equality. Pitt had realised this, and had practically promised that a measure of Catholic Emancipation should be promptly passed by the United Parliament. But when he came to propose it, he found that George III had a rooted objection, and was convinced that to concede such a measure would be a violation of his coronation oath. The king's reason was tottering, and the excitement might have overturned it. Pitt, therefore, did not insist, but resigned his post to preserve his personal honour. It may perhaps be doubted whether the reason of a king was more important than the peace of a nation.

3. Effects of the War upon the British Empire

The French Revolutionary War had a very direct effect upon the development of the British Empire, and led to considerable acquisitions of territory.

The West Indies.—In the West Indies there was hard fighting during the first years. The ideas of the revolution created great excitement among the negro slaves in some of the islands. Large military and naval forces were employed in suppressing these troubles, notably in Jamaica, and in conquering the French islands.* For five years British forces were engaged on a futile struggle in the

* Marryat's rattling yarns, especially *Peter Simple* and *Midshipman Easy*, deal largely with the West Indies, as well as with the general naval warfare of the period.

French island of San Domingo, where the negroes had revolted and overwhelmed their white masters; the losses in this resultless war were heavier than those in Europe; yet in the end a remarkable negro leader, Toussaint l'Ouverture, succeeded in driving out the British army (1798).

Conquests in the West.—When the Dutch joined the French (1795) an expedition was sent to Dutch Guiana (1796), and Demerara was conquered: this was the beginning of *British Guiana*. When Spain also came in (1796), the fine Spanish island of *Trinidad* was conquered. There was also hard fighting on the coast of Honduras, where Spain tried to expel the British traders who had long resorted to this coast to cut logwood. The "Baymen" held their own; and thereafter *British Honduras* was regularly organised as a colony. In spite of all this fighting, the West Indies enjoyed during the war a period of great prosperity: they were accounted the most valuable of all the British possessions.

Conquests from the Dutch.—More important conquests were made from the Dutch in the East. In 1796, after the Dutch declaration of war, a fleet and an army were dispatched to the Cape of Good Hope, for it seemed important not to leave in enemy hands that vital port of call on the way to India. There had been a modest Dutch colony at the Cape since 1652, and the settlers, spreading outwards, had already spread over a great part of the modern *Cape Colony*,* which now for the first time became a British possession. Finally, the Island of *Ceylon* had long been controlled by the Dutch. In 1795 it was occupied by a detachment of troops from India; and in 1798 it was organised as a separate colony under the direct authority of the British Crown. Thus the involvement of Britain in war with the other colonising powers led to an easy and almost automatic expansion of the new British Empire, whose foundations had been laid so soon after the loss of the American colonies.

4. Wellesley and Paramount Power in India (1798–1805)

But all other imperial developments were dwarfed by the extraordinary expansion of the British power in India† which directly resulted from the French revolutionary war.

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*b*.
† See School Atlas, Plate 53*c*.

Situation in India.—When the war broke out in 1793, Lord Cornwallis's governorship was just coming to an end. His successor, Sir John Shore (1793–1798) felt himself bound by his instructions from home to avoid all interventions in native politics. The result was that the greater native states learned to distrust the British power, and fell an easy prey to the intrigues of the French. Tipu Sahib, of Mysore, whom Cornwallis had recently defeated, was burning for revenge. He engaged French officers to reorganise his army, and made a secret treaty with the French at Mauritius : this ferocious tyrant was known in Paris as *citoyen Tipou*, and was regarded as an invaluable ally against Britain. The greatest of the Maratha princes, notably Sindhia, also had French officers to train their armies. And the Nizam of Hyderabad, who was in a dangerous position between Tipu and the Marathas, and who suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Marathas in 1795, felt that his French-officered army was his only protection, since the British power refused to have anything to do with him. Thus the result of the policy of non-intervention, laid down in the Act of 1784, was that the Company was left without allies, and that all the native powers were under French influence.

Wellesley in India.—This was the situation in 1798, when Napoleon set forth upon his Egyptian campaign, meaning to make Egypt the base for an attack upon India. At this moment, in April 1798—just three months before Napoleon landed in Egypt—a new Governor-General arrived in India : Lord Mornington, later Marquis of Wellesley,* and elder brother of the Duke of Wellington, whose great career started in India under his brother's ægis. Wellesley at once saw that it was necessary to abandon the policy of non-intervention, and to return to the policy of Warren Hastings, who had striven to maintain peace in India by means of a system of alliances with the native powers. But Wellesley's aims went far beyond those of Hastings. He believed that peace in India could only be maintained under the control of a supreme power ; and he had made up his mind that that supreme power should be Britain.

Overthrow of Mysore.—The most immediate danger came from Tipu, who was manifestly preparing to attack. Wellesley first offered to Tipu's neighbour, the Nizam, a guarantee of his territories

* There is a good short Life of Wellesley by W. H. Hutton (Rulers of India).

on condition that he dismissed his French officers. He then launched against Tipu a carefully prepared attack; *Seringapatam*, Tipu's capital, was taken by storm, and the Sultan himself fell. The State of Mysore was deprived of half of its territories, all its lands on the west coast being annexed by the Company. The throne of what remained was given to the heir of the old Hindu rajas whom Tipu's father Hyder Ali had displaced; but a treaty which put him in a position of definite subordination was imposed upon him. He was to be protected by a British force, the cost of which he was to pay; and he was to have no independent relations with any external power. This treaty of "subsidiary alliance" was the model for the future relations of the Company with the Indian States.

Organisation of Southern India.—Wellesley next made a new permanent treaty with the Nizam (1800), whereby he also became a "subsidiary ally" contributing the cost of the army which was to defend him. A little later (1801) the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Raja of Tanjore, whose territories had been misgoverned, were pensioned off, and their States were taken under direct administration. Thus in three years the whole of southern India was brought under British supremacy; the area directly governed by British officials was vastly increased, and all the native States had been reduced to direct subordination.

The North-West Provinces.—Wellesley also turned his attention to the north. Here the extensive State of Oudh, which had been an ally of the Company since 1765, had fallen into a condition of complete confusion and misgovernment; Shore had tried in vain to reform it. Wellesley persuaded the Vizier of Oudh to accept a new treaty of "subsidiary alliance," on the familiar model, and at the same time to cede to the Company about half of his territories. These ceded lands, from Rohilkhand to Allahabad, included the whole of the region between the Ganges and the Jumna, and curved round the diminished State of Oudh, lying like a barrier between it and the Marathas. It became the "North-West Provinces," attached to Bengal. Warren Hastings had conceived of Oudh as a barrier against the Marathas; Wellesley, having reduced Oudh to complete subordination, had interposed a long line of British territory between that State and the Marathas. Thus the whole of the Ganges valley, as well as the whole of southern India, had now been brought under British control. The organisation of these new provinces was a great undertaking. The ability with which it was

carried out was not the least of Wellesley's achievements. He got together a group of men of great capacity, who did much to fix the traditions and methods of British rule in India.

This was as far as Wellesley's work had been carried when the Peace of Amiens was concluded. But it will be convenient to carry on here the story of his administration down to 1805, when he was recalled.

The Treaty of Bassein.—The formidable Maratha con-

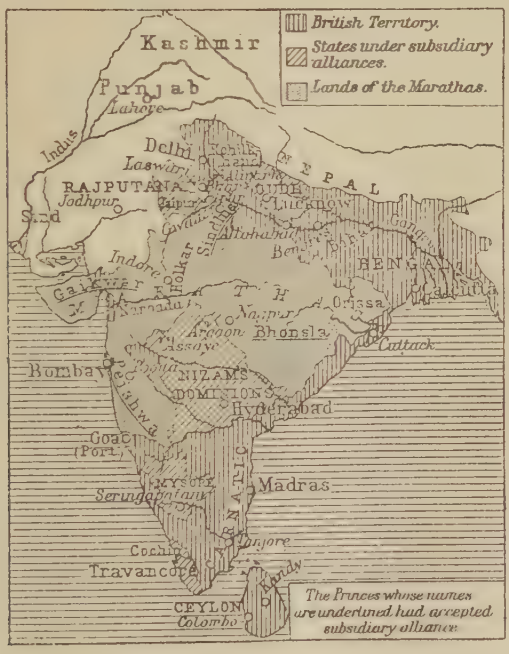

FIG. 32.—India in 1805.

federacy of princes now found itself hemmed in between the two great blocks of the British Indian Empire—the Ganges valley in the north, and the Deccan in the south. To complete Wellesley's grandiose conception of a British supremacy extending over all India, the Maratha princes also had to be brought into a condition of dependence. An opportunity of achieving this end presented itself in 1802, when an intestine war was raging among the Maratha princes, and the Peshwa—the head of the confederacy—

was dethroned by Holkar, Raja of Indore. Wellesley offered to restore the Peshwa to his throne at Poona on condition that he accepted a "subsidiary alliance." He did so by the *Treaty of Bassein* (1802); was restored by a British army under Arthur Wellesley; and reascended his throne as a vassal of the East India Company.

War with the Marathas.—But the Marathas, who had so recently dominated India, were not likely to submit to this arrangement, which destroyed all possibility of a Maratha supremacy. The directors of the East India Company at home were equally alarmed by the far-reaching ambitions which this policy revealed. Their condemnation of the Treaty of Bassein, however, did not reach India until the two most powerful of the Maratha princes, Sindhia of Gwalior and Bhonsla of Nagpur, had declared war (1803). Three months sufficed for the war. In the south, Arthur Wellesley made his name by the brilliant victories of *Assaye* and *Argaon;* in the north, General Lake stormed the fortress of *Aligarh*, defeated the army of Sindhia under its French officers at *Delhi*, and finally shattered it at *Laswari*. The result of this series of crushing blows was that Bhonsla had to cede the coast-province of Orissa, which linked up Bengal with Madras; that both he and Sindhia had to accept subsidiary alliances; and that the blind old Mogul Emperor and his historic capital of Delhi—symbols of Indian supremacy—passed from the protection of the Marathas to the protection of the East India Company (1803).

Recall of Wellesley.—One powerful Maratha prince, however—Holkar—was still unconquered; he had taken no part in the war. He now declared war on his own account. He had not Europeanised his army, but still clung to the old Maratha fashion of fighting with clouds of elusive horsemen. He was able to inflict a serious reverse upon a British force under Colonel Monson (1804), while his ally, the Raja of Bharatpur, repelled an attack upon his capital. These were only momentary checks; it is beyond doubt that Wellesley would have achieved his ends, and established the paramount power of the Company over all the Maratha princes and their vassals. But these checks gave to the Directors the excuse which they wanted. They recalled Wellesley when his work was on the verge of completion; and the Marathas were allowed to resume almost all their old independence.

Effects of Wellesley's Rule.—Nevertheless, Wellesley had achieved amazing results in an incredibly short time. He had

practically turned the British Empire *in* India into the British Empire *of* India. Henceforward the East India Company, acting under the control of the British Government, was the paramount power in a sub-continent as large and as populous as the whole of Europe excluding Russia. This was less than fifty years after Clive won the battle of Plassey. It was an achievement essentially more remarkable, and destined to be far more lasting, than all the conquests of Napoleon. Wellesley was not only a great conqueror, he was a great administrator. The men whom he chose to organise his new provinces, and to perform the delicate work of Residents at the courts of the dependent princes, did remarkable work. Wellesley himself carried out a separation of judicial from administrative work which was of high value; and he had other bold projects of reorganisation which the timidity of the Directors did not allow him to carry out. After Clive and Warren Hastings, he was the third great founder of the British Empire in India.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST NAPOLEON (1803–1815)

1. The Conflict of the Elephant and the Whale

Renewal of War.—When Napoleon concluded the Treaty of Amiens, he had no intention of making peace permanent. He wanted a breathing-space in which to organise his power in France, to consolidate his position in Europe, to build up a fleet, and to reconstruct a French colonial empire. Fortunately for the British peoples and the world, he did not give himself time enough. The peace had lasted only eighteen months (October 1801–May 1803) when it was terminated by Napoleon's own eager impatience to strike down the power of Britain, which seemed to be—and was—the only obstacle in the way of his grandiose designs. But in this short time he achieved marvellous results.

Napoleon's Empire.—By the new constitution of 1799, which was ratified by a plebiscite of the French nation, Napoleon had become First Consul for ten years. He had nominally to work with two other consuls, and an elaborate series of legislative bodies; but

these had very little power, and from the beginning the First Consul was practically a dictator. This did not satisfy him. In 1802, again with the support of a plebiscite, he became Consul for life; and in 1804 he became Emperor, and the title was made hereditary. Meanwhile the powers of the various legislative bodies were whittled away till they amounted to nothing. Napoleon was in fact a despot; but his was a popular despotism, resting upon repeated popular votes; it was also a military despotism, supported by the enthusiastic devotion of the army. It was popular because it was efficient. Both by his wonderful codes of law, and by the firm hand which he kept over his local representatives, Napoleon gave to France better government than she had ever known, though there was not a trace of democracy in it. It was supported by a very elaborate system of secret police; and freedom of speech and of the Press was suppressed. The whole of the resources of the most powerful country in Europe were absolutely at Napoleon's disposal. France already included all Belgium, and Germany as far as the Rhine, and in 1802 Piedmont, in Northern Italy, was annexed.

Napoleon's Vassals.—Round France lay a ring of dependent States, conquered by the Republic, upon which Napoleon imposed constitutions modelled on the new constitution of France. Northern Italy became (1805) the Kingdom of Italy,* and Napoleon assumed its crown. Holland was forced to accept a dictated constitution (1801). In Germany (1801) Napoleon intervened as mediator, and built up out of the innumerable German States a few stronger ones which were bound to him in alliance. † Spain dared not resist his orders. He was effectively master of Western Europe. ‡

His Colonial Aims.—Europe was not enough. He was revolving great schemes of oversea dominion. An army of 25,000 men was sent during the peace to reconquer San Domingo in the West Indies. Spain was forced to give back to France the vast region of Louisiana, west of the Mississippi: a new French empire was to be created in America. A mission was sent to Egypt, and its report (which was published during the peace) stated that 6,000 men would be enough to hold that country for France. A

* For the Napoleonic Reconstruction of Italy, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 19, fig. 18.

† For the German mediatisation, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 21, fig. 22, and also the larger Atlas, Plate 72*a*.

‡ School Atlas, Plate 18.

small army was also sent out to garrison the French trading stations in India—where French officers, as we have seen, were in command of the armies of the Maratha princes, soon to make war against the Company.

The Outbreak of War.—Evidently the hopes of lasting peace which were entertained in Britain were doomed to disappointment. Napoleon clearly thought he was strong enough to deal with Britain. He made many complaints, demanding the expulsion of French exiles, and the suppression of newspapers which criticised him. Finally, he demanded the immediate evacuation of Malta (as promised by the Treaty of Amiens) and the recognition of his annexations in Italy and Switzerland, which were in defiance of treaties. In May 1803, Addington's Cabinet declared war. Napoleon replied by imprisoning 10,000 British travellers who had gone to France.

This was the opening of the most desperate conflict in which Britain had ever been engaged.* At the outset she stood alone ; but in the course of the twelve years of fighting which followed, all Europe was drawn in. This was not a war against revolutionary ideas ; it was a war to resist the subjugation of Europe and the world by the mightiest military despotism that had ever existed. Napoleon himself realised the nature of the conflict. "England is the enemy," he said, "and the struggle will be between her and ME. All Europe will be our instruments, sometimes serving one, sometimes the other."

2. The Attempt to Invade Britain (1803–1805)

The Plan of Invasion.—Napoleon's first object was to bring the war to a rapid conclusion by an invasion of England. A magnificent army of 100,000 veterans, known as "the Army of England," was assembled on the shores of the Straits of Dover, with its headquarters at Boulogne. Two thousand flat-bottomed boats were constructed to ferry them across, and they were constantly practised in rapid embarkation. Here they remained, from June 1803 to September 1805, waiting for a chance of getting across without being intercepted by the British fleet. But the chance of their doing so was very small : Nelson was in charge of the scheme of naval defence. Meanwhile a vast number of volunteers were enrolled in Britain,

* Thomas Hardy's great chronicle-play, *The Dynasts*, deals imaginatively with the whole titanic conflict. Read also Wordsworth's patriotic sonnets, which nobly expressed the spirit of Britain in these years.

some 300,000 in all, drawn from all classes.* The dockyards were working at full pressure, adding new vessels to the navy; while strong blockading squadrons watched all the French and Dutch naval ports.

Pitt's Return to Power.—In Ireland Napoleon tried to stir up a rising. It was led by a gallant lad, Robert Emmet (1803); but it came to nothing beyond a riot in the streets of Dublin, in which the Chief Justice was killed. In England the sense of national danger led to a demand for the return of Pitt to power. Pitt would have liked to form a national ministry, including the Whigs under Fox; but George III's hatred of Fox was still so strong that this was impossible; the more extreme Tories also stood out; and it was with a very weak government that Pitt faced the second great war peril with which he had had to deal. From the moment of his taking office, he strove to build up a new European coalition to ward off the danger of invasion; once more he offered to pay the cost of European armies, and he succeeded in stimulating Austria and Russia, Sweden and Naples, to take up arms. But the Third Coalition was not formed until 1805, and until then the peril of invasion continued.

Naval Strategy.—Napoleon soon realised that invasion was impossible unless the Channel could be held, if only for a short time, by naval power. In 1804 he forced Spain to declare war once more against Britain. But the problem was, how to bring about a concentration of the scattered French and Spanish fleets, so as to control the Channel; for the British blockading squadrons (especially that off Brest, under Cornwallis) hung on very persistently. In 1805 he worked out a very ingenious plan. The various fleets, or as many of them as possible, were to slip out from port and *rendezvous* in the West Indies. This, it was expected, would draw off the British fleets for the defence of these valuable islands. Then the fleets were to make straight back to Europe, release any blockaded squadrons left behind, and hold the Channel while the army of invasion crossed.

Villeneuve and Nelson.—In March 1805, Villeneuve, with the French Mediterranean fleet, got out from Toulon, and, picking up a Spanish squadron at Cadiz, made for the West Indies.† Nelson, though outnumbered by almost two to one, pursued him, and reached

* Scott's novel, *The Antiquary*, which deals with this period, gives an amusing account of the volunteers and their occasional alarms.

† School Atlas, Introduction, p. 28, Fig. 42.

the West Indies not long after him. When the news came that Villeneuve had been seen making from the islands for the open sea, the West Indian authorities, convinced that this was only a ruse, insisted that Nelson must remain to defend them. But he saw through the device; and sending his swiftest ship to warn the Admiralty, set sail once more across the Atlantic. The result was that when Villeneuve returned, he was met off *Ferrol* by a squadron under Sir Robert Calder, with whom he fought an indecisive battle. Instead of pressing on, and trying to relieve the blockaded fleet at Brest, he fell back first upon Corunna, and later upon Cadiz. The danger of a naval concentration in the Channel was at an end. The coalition of European Powers had been completed just when Nelson's return checkmated Napoleon's scheme; and the Army of England had to break up its camp at Boulogne.

Trafalgar.—But the big naval concentration under Villeneuve still lay at Cadiz. Nelson was given the task of dealing with it. With twenty-seven ships he sailed from Portsmouth on September 28th, 1805. Stung by Napoleon's taunts, Villeneuve came out to meet him with his thirty-three; and on October 21st, off Cape Trafalgar, the most decisive naval battle in history was fought.* Between noon and 5 p.m. on a grey autumn day, the enemy fleet was shattered: eighteen of its ships were sunk or captured, and four more were subsequently taken. The sovereignty of the seas remained unchallengeably in British hands; and however great the power of Napoleon might become, it stopped at the sea-shore. Nelson, mortally wounded early in the fight, had the supreme felicity that, as he gave up his life, he knew that his life-work was triumphantly finished.

3. Napoleon Master of Europe (1805–1807)

Third Coalition Shattered.—The day before the battle of Trafalgar, the French army, hurled swiftly across Europe, forced an Austrian army to capitulate at *Ulm*. In November Napoleon occupied Vienna. At the beginning of December he won, at *Austerlitz*, † the most dazzling of all his victories, over a combined Austrian and Russian army. Before the end of the year Austria

* For the battle of Trafalgar, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 29, fig. 43.
† For the battle of Austerlitz, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 15, fig. 11.

was out of the war, and had submitted to the humiliating Treaty of Pressburg.

Reorganisation of Europe.—Napoleon was free to reorganise Central Europe (1806). He annexed Venetia and Dalmatia, taken from Austria, to his Italian kingdom. He conquered Naples, and turned it into a kingdom for his brother Joseph. He turned Holland into a kingdom for his brother Louis. He swept away the Holy Roman Empire, which had existed for a thousand years, rearranged the whole political geography of Germany,* and grouped the consolidated States which he had created into a Confederation of the Rhine, bound to permanent alliance with France, and required to supply an army for every fresh war.

Jena and Tilsit.—In October 1806, Prussia, which had enjoyed a profitable neutrality for ten years (since 1795), found it impossible any longer to endure Napoleon's contemptuous treatment, and declared war. In a week's campaign her army was routed at *Jena*† and *Auerstadt;* Berlin was occupied; and the king of Prussia fell back upon the protection of Russia. But (after a check at *Eylau*) Napoleon decisively defeated the Russians also, at *Friedland* (1807). The Tsar, fascinated by the conqueror's genius, resolved to make peace with him. They met on a raft in the River Niemen, at *Tilsit* (1807), made alliance against Britain, and settled (or so it seemed) the fate of Europe. Prussia had to submit to the loss of two-thirds of her territories, to the payment of an indemnity, to the limitation of her army, and to the maintenance of a large French army on her soil. Part of her territory went to form a kingdom of Westphalia for Napoleon's brother Jerome. Another part (her spoil from the partitions of Poland) went to form a grand Duchy of Warsaw, in dependent alliance with France.‡

Britain v. **Europe.**—In two years the geography of Europe had been reconstructed; and Napoleon was master of the Continent. There was no power in the world capable of resisting him—except the sea-power of Britain. Once more Britain stood alone. Supreme land-power threatened supreme sea-power. Was there any means by which either could overcome the other? That was the great problem of the years following 1806. It deeply exercised the

* See School Atlas, Introduction, p. 21, fig. 22.

† For the battle of Jena, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 15, fig. 12.

‡ For all this, see School Atlas, Plates 18 and 19c.

powerful mind of Napoleon. It was never very clearly faced in Britain, which rather drifted into the right solution than found it by deliberate thought; because the men who guided British affairs during these years were mostly of second-rate quality. They had an admirable bull-dog tenacity; but they showed no great strategic instinct, and even when Fate gave them a superlative opportunity in Spain, and a very able leader in Wellington, they were slow to realise the possibilities of either.

War Ministries in Britain.—Pitt died in 1806. He was killed by the cataclysm of Austerlitz, and by the strain of responsibility. After him, for a few months, there was a Ministry of All the Talents, under Pitt's cousin, Lord Grenville, which included Fox and the Whigs. Fox tried to make peace with Napoleon, and found it impossible: the strain killed him also, in 1807,* and the ministry broke up, being split on the question of Catholic Emancipation. Then followed a succession of stolid Tory ministries, under Portland (1807), Perceval (1809), and Liverpool (1812), whose only virtue was their tenacity. The two ablest men in the Portland ministry, George Canning and Lord Castlereagh, were bitter enemies, and actually fought a duel in 1809: this kept Castlereagh out of office until 1812, when he assumed the main direction of foreign affairs; it kept Canning out of office for the remainder of the war. Between 1809 and 1812, Lord Wellesley, now back from India, played an important part as Foreign Secretary, and did good service by supporting his brother's policy in Spain; but Wellesley was too much of a proconsul to be a successful politician. In the main, the war was carried on by a group of unimaginative Tory politicians, who showed no brilliance, but also showed no weakness. They carried their country through the most terrible ordeal it had ever undergone.

4. The Continental System

Failure of Naval Plans.—In the phase of his war against Britain which opened in 1807, Napoleon did not wholly abandon the idea of rebuilding his naval strength. The Brest fleet was still intact, and additions were made to it. In 1807 he ordered Denmark to join in the war against Britain, partly with a view to using her fleet; and a similar demand was made upon Portugal, while a

* Scott has some good verses on the deaths of Pitt and Fox.

Russian squadron was brought round from the Black Sea to Lisbon. But these plans were checkmated. In 1807 a British fleet was sent to Denmark, and the Danish Government was forced to hand over its fleet into British safekeeping for the period of the war—a high-handed act which aroused much criticism even in Britain. The Portuguese fleet escaped to Brazil, with British help, when Napoleon tried to occupy Portugal (1808), and the Russian squadron was captured when Wellesley won the battle of Vimeiro (p. 498 below). With the outbreak of the Peninsular War, what remained of the Spanish fleet also passed to the British side. Finally, in 1809, the main French fleet came out from Brest, and was destroyed in *Aix Roads*. Thus the naval supremacy of Britain was made impregnable.

The Continental System.—Napoleon was therefore thrown back upon his second, and more important, method of attack ; which was an attempt to ruin Britain by excluding her trade from the Continent of Europe. This was not a new idea : the republican government had tried it in 1796, and the British Government had responded by declaring a blockade of the whole French coast, to the great inconvenience of neutral traders. But Napoleon was able, as the Republic had never been, to impose his commands upon the whole of Europe except Turkey. This plan was begun, in November 1806, by the issue of the *Berlin Decree*, which declared a blockade of the whole of the British Islands, and announced that any vessel which brought British goods to Europe would be seized. Britain replied with an *Order in Council* (1807), whereby a blockade was declared of all ports from which British goods were excluded. Napoleon rejoined with the *Milan Decree* (1807), in which he announced that any neutral vessel calling at a British port was liable to seizure. Further Orders in Council followed on the British side. Both sides were thus trying to force the neutrals to side with them ; and both sides were making neutral trade extremely difficult. But Britain was in a far better position than Napoleon to enforce her edicts, and for that reason her measures, though essentially measures of self-defence, were more resented than Napoleon's more arbitrary decrees by the only important neutral which now survived—the United States of America. There was trouble between Britain and America throughout the years of this fierce trade war ; and it led to the unhappy American War of 1812 (p. 502).

Effects of the Continental System.—If Napoleon could have carried out his "Continental System" completely, and her-

metically sealed Europe against British trade, unquestionably Britain would have been ruined and brought to her knees. As it was, the system inflicted terrible sufferings upon her people, because the markets for her rapidly growing machine-production were seriously restricted just when it was necessary that they should be expanded if her people were to be kept employed. But, in fact, the system could not be fully carried out, because Britain commanded a practical monopoly of two classes of goods with which Europe could not easily dispense—the products of the new machine-production, especially cotton and woollen goods ; and the products of the tropics, especially sugar and tobacco. The extraction of sugar from beet-root was developed by French chemists as a substitute for colonial sugar, but its production could not be expanded quickly enough to meet the need. Napoleon himself had to defy his own regulations in order to clothe his armies : the Russian army of 1812 was largely clothed with woollens from Yorkshire.

Organised Smuggling.—In spite of all prohibitions, a vast smuggling trade was carried on, and immense energy and resource were shown by British traders in organising it. Its chief centres were *Heligoland*, an island off the mouth of the Elbe which Britain occupied for this purpose in 1807, and from which a great stream of goods passed up the German rivers ; *Gibraltar*, whence goods passed into Spain until the whole of Spain was thrown open by the Peninsular War in 1808 ; *Malta* and *Sicily*, whence Italy was supplied ; the *Ionian Islands*, which were annexed for this purpose in 1809, and from which a stream of traffic passed up the Adriatic ; and *Greece* and *Turkey*, whence a steady traffic passed to Central Europe up the Danube. Moreover, some of Napoleon's dependent allies were anything but strict in carrying out his decrees, and trade passed, for some years, pretty openly through Holland, Denmark, and the Papal States. It was, in fact, impossible to enforce the system, because the whole population of Europe was eager to buy the goods which British merchants were now alone able to supply. This aspect of the war was carried on by the whole trading community of Britain ; and they beat the Dictator, though not without much suffering.

Napoleon's Tyranny.—In the attempt to make his project effective, Napoleon was driven to adopt methods which roused against him the anger of his subjects. Finding that the smuggling of colonial goods and British manufactures could not be stopped, he imposed, by the *Trianon Tariff* of 1810, a duty of 50 per cent. on all

colonial goods, thus greatly increasing their already high prices; and by the *Fontainebleau Decrees* of the same year he actually ordained that British manufactures, wherever found, should be seized and destroyed. Nothing did more to make his rule intolerable than the wanton destruction of much-needed supplies. All the peoples of Europe were forced to realise that he was the cause of their sufferings.

FIG. 33.—Napoleon's Empire.

Napoleon's Annexations.—Moreover, in order to stop the growing volume of smuggled trade, he was driven to high-handed annexations of territory.* His treatment of Spain and Portugal in 1808, which began the Peninsular War, was in part due to this cause. When the Pope refused to close his ports to British ships,

* These are shown on the map of Napoleon's Empire, School Atlas, Plate 18.

Napoleon first occupied (1808) and then annexed (1809) the Papal States, and sent the aged Pope into captivity, thus outraging Catholic opinion, which he had previously tried to placate. In 1809 he brought the Dalmatian coast and a stretch of Austrian territory behind it under direct French rule, in order to stop that great leak. In 1810 he suppressed the Kingdom of Holland and annexed it to France ; he also occupied the German coast-line as far as Lübeck—including the territories of the Duke of Oldenburg, a cousin of his ally the Tsar. All these annexations, which aroused a growing feeling against him, were due to his desperate resolve to make his Continental System effective. They were among the causes of his downfall. They helped to arouse against him the national sentiment which was to be his undoing, and which was greatly strengthened by resentment against the suffering caused by his policy.

5. The Peninsular War (First Phase) (1808–1811)

New Methods of War.—In the struggle against Napoleon's new methods of warfare, Britain found her way to a new method of utilising her command of the seas. There were no more naval battles to be fought. But the navy could enable armies to be landed at any point where they could be of service, and could afford to them, in case of need, a safe retreat across the seas. There were several minor examples of this method during these years. An early instance was provided in 1806, when a small British force was landed in southern Italy, and won at *Maida* a brilliant little victory over the French forces which had just occupied the kingdom of Italy ; but it could not maintain its ground, and was safely withdrawn. But the supreme example was given in the Spanish Peninsula,* where Napoleon's overweening insolence opened a great opportunity.

Annexation of Spain and Portugal.—At the end of 1807, with the concurrence of Spain, Napoleon sent an army under Junot across Spain to occupy Portugal. It was followed by other French armies, which occupied the main strategic points in northern Spain. Then the king of Spain and his son were inveigled to Bayonne, and forced to abdicate. Napoleon bestowed the crown of Spain upon his

* For the Peninsular War, see School Atlas, Plate 26*b*, and the larger Atlas, Plate 70.

brother Joseph, and Madrid was occupied. But he had counted without Spanish patriotism. The whole country rose, and organised itself under provincial "Juntas." The city of Saragossa repelled a French army. Another French army was forced to capitulate at *Baylen* in Andalusia (July 1808). This successful resistance caused immense excitement throughout Europe, and stimulated patriotism everywhere. In August a small British army, under Arthur Wellesley, was landed in Portugal to help the Portuguese. Wellesley defeated Junot at *Vimeiro*, and would have destroyed his force if his superior officer, arriving after the battle, had not stopped the pursuit and accepted the *Convention of Cintra*, whereby Junot was allowed to withdraw his army. For this the British commanders were recalled to face a court-martial, and the command of the army in Portugal was given to Sir John Moore.

The Retreat to Corunna.—These checks had to be redressed; and in October 1808, Napoleon himself entered Spain, with a superb army of 200,000 men. The Spanish forces were swept aside; Madrid was occupied; and the complete subjugation of Spain seemed to be at hand. But Sir John Moore, with his little army of 27,000 men, made a bold stroke to redeem the situation. Marching from Portugal into the heart of Spain, he threatened the French lines of communication. Napoleon turned back, hoping to capture the British army. Then came a gallant fighting retreat, not to Portugal (for the road was closed) but towards the north-west where it reached Corunna and the sea. The last stage of the pursuit was left to Marshal Soult, who had to submit to a severe defeat at *Corunna*, January 1809, before the British army was withdrawn across the sea by the waiting fleet. Moore was killed in the battle, but he had saved Spain.*

Wagram and Walcheren.—Napoleon himself never again visited Spain. He was drawn off by the news that Austria, encouraged by the Spanish rising, had declared war again. He had hard fighting—harder fighting than he had yet experienced—in the summer of 1809 before he defeated the Austrians at Wagram (July); and it was not until October that they were forced to accept the Treaty of Vienna by which they made large cessions of territory to France and her dependent allies. To help the Austrians, the British Government resolved to attack the Netherlands, and a substantial

* Read Wolfe's famous verses, *The Burial of Sir John Moore*.

army (which would have been very useful in the Peninsula) was sent to the island of *Walcheren*, off the mouth of the Scheldt. This expedition was a complete failure.

Wellesley Advances.—Nevertheless Wellesley,* who had now resumed command of the British army in the Peninsula, achieved great things during 1809. He captured *Oporto* (May), and drove Soult out of Portugal. Then, turning south, he marched into Spain, to co-operate with the Spanish armies, and won a brilliant victory at *Talavera* (July). But new French armies were coming up, and the Spaniards were impracticable and untrustworthy. He had to fall

FIG. 34.—The Peninsular War.

back upon Portugal, and to look on while the French—reinforced after the defeat of Austria—crushed the Spanish resistance in Andalusia, the only province where organised Spanish armies held out.

Torres Vedras.—In 1810 Napoleon hoped to bring this dragging war—so unlike his usual thunderbolt triumphs—to an end by destroying the British Army, which was the backbone of the resistance. For this purpose he entrusted a fine army of 130,000 men to his best general, Masséna, while other armies, numbering in

* There is a good short Life of Wellington by George Hooper (English Men of Action).

all some 300,000, held down the provinces of Spain. Wellesley (now Lord Wellington), who had only 30,000 British troops and an equal number of untried Portuguese, prepared for the storm by fortifying the lines of *Torres Vedras*,* across the peninsula between the Tagus and the sea. He cleared the country along the French line of advance of all foodstuffs, and removed the population, partly behind his fortifications, where they could be fed from the sea. He inflicted a sharp check upon Masséna's advancing army at *Busaco;* and then fell back upon Torres Vedras. Masséna found himself, in a foodless country, faced by impregnable fortifications. He could do nothing but retreat; and in the retreat he lost 25,000 men. No French force ever again entered Portugal.

Apparent Deadlock.—This was the real turning-point of the war, but at home there was impatience, because no progress seemed to be made. The impatience grew when the whole year 1811 was spent in fighting round the fortresses which guarded the main roads into Spain—Ciudad Rodrigo in the north, Badajoz in the south. Neither was captured, though two bloody battles were fought—*Fuentes d'Onoro* near Ciudad Rodrigo, and *Albuera* near Badajoz. Meanwhile, in Spain, no Spanish army dared to measure swords with the French; but in every part of the country daring guerilla bands made the French occupation insecure. In fact, during these years, Wellington was holding the fort, and inflicting upon the French an incessant and intolerable strain.† Napoleon spoke of the war in the Peninsula as a "running sore"; and his failure to heal it was a constant encouragement to the underground movements which were elsewhere at work, especially in Germany.

6. The Peninsular War (Second Phase) and the Downfall of Napoleon (1812–1814)

The Russian Campaign.—In 1812 the tide at last turned. Irritation with the Continental System brought a breach between Napoleon and his most valued ally, Alexander of Russia. In 1810 and 1811 Alexander had gradually relaxed the restrictions upon British trade. The Continental System was failing. Unless Russia could be forced to come into line again, other countries would follow

* For the Lines of Torres Vedras, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 20, fig. 20.

† Lever's *Charles O'Malley* is a rollicking tale of the Peninsular War.

suit : Sweden was already beginning to do so. Napoleon resolved to teach Alexander a lesson, and got together, from France and from all her subject allies, the most magnificent army that Europe had ever seen, for the invasion of Russia. The Russian campaign held Europe spell-bound during the summer of 1812. Napoleon defeated the Russians at *Borodino*, and occupied Moscow. But he could not hold the city, a large part of which was burnt by patriotic Russians. He had to retreat. Winter caught him. The snows, aided by Russian attacks, destroyed the most superb army Europe had ever seen, and the spell of the invincible Emperor was broken. In the meanwhile, the Russian campaign had drawn off troops from Spain, and given Wellington his chance.

Advance into Spain.—In the campaign of 1812, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz were stormed, and Wellington, advancing far into Spain, inflicted a crushing defeat on the French under Marmont at *Salamanca*. For a moment Madrid was occupied, and King Joseph had to flee. And although it was regained by a concentration of French forces, this involved the evacuation of southern Spain. The clearing of Spain had begun. And, for the next and decisive campaign, Wellington was given the supreme command of all the Spanish forces as well as of the British and Portuguese.

Leipzig.—In 1813 Napoleon, back from Russia, was fighting desperately with improvised armies to maintain his hold over Central Europe. Prussia, which had been secretly preparing for vengeance ever since 1806, had been encouraged to revolt by the Russian disaster ; and presently Austria and Sweden joined. At first Napoleon held his own ; but in the later part of the summer of 1813, the ring of foes closed round him at *Leipzig :** he had to admit defeat, and his power over all Europe east of the Rhine crumbled away.

The Clearing of Spain.—To meet this terrible ordeal, large forces had to be withdrawn from Spain, though, even so, the French armies in Spain still outnumbered those of Wellington. Wellington's task was made easier ; but, on the other hand, if he had not exercised steady pressure—still more if he had been cleared out of the way in 1809 or 1810—Napoleon would almost certainly have been victorious in Central Europe. The defeat of Napoleon was achieved as much in Spain as on the field of Leipzig. Wellington's campaign

* For the battles of Leipzig, see School Atlas, Introduction, p. 15, fig. 13.

of 1813 was perhaps the most masterly of the series. He manœuvred the French steadily backwards until they were against the Pyrenees. Then he inflicted upon them a crushing defeat at *Vittoria* (June) : it was the news of Vittoria that encouraged the European allies to their final attack at Leipzig. By the end of the campaign Wellington had crossed the frontier of France, forcing two successive lines of defence, on the *Nive* and the *Nivelle*. His was the first hostile army to encamp on French soil since 1793.

The Downfall of Napoleon.—In 1814 Napoleon was forced back into France, and was fighting desperately against a ring of enemies, striking fiercely this way and that, but steadily borne down until, on April 11th, he was forced to abdicate at Fontainebleau. Even in this last stage, he might have held his own if he had been able to use the army with which Marshal Soult was striving to withstand Wellington's continued attacks. Soult had to submit to defeats at *Orthez* (February) and at *Toulouse* (April) ; this final battle of the Peninsular War was actually fought after Napoleon had abdicated, though before the news could reach the combatants.

The Whale becomes Amphibious.—The last long phase of the war, from 1806 to 1814, had been essentially a duel between land-power and sea-power. Land-power had struck its blow, and it had returned like a boomerang. The Continental System was the cause of Napoleon's downfall ; but his fall was quickened by the fact that, in the Spanish Peninsula, sea-power had found an ideal field for the operation of armies supported from the sea.

7. The American War of 1812

During the last three years of the Peninsular War an unhappy conflict had been raging between Britain and the United States of America. This was one of the most unfortunate consequences of the Continental System.

America and the Revolution.—Bad feeling already existed between Britain and the States before the French Revolution came to embitter it still further. The States had refused to carry out the terms of the Treaty of 1783 in regard to the compensation of the Loyalists, and Britain had consequently refused to hand over certain fortresses on the American side of the Great Lakes. When the Revolution began in France, American opinion was strongly in sympathy with it ; and when the war between France and Britain

began, American feeling was so bitter against Britain that the States nearly came into the war on the French side. A new cause of quarrel arose when British warships began to stop American trading vessels to search for deserters from the navy. Washington (now President) succeeded in preserving neutrality, and even negotiated, in 1794, the *Jay Treaty*, whereby a joint commission was set up to settle the boundary between Canada and the United States—perhaps the earliest example of arbitration on such a matter. But Washington belonged to the more conservative "Federalist Party" in American politics. The rival party of "Republicans," led by Thomas Jefferson, was violently anti-British. Nevertheless, the force of circumstances almost drove the States on to the English side. From 1798 to 1801 there was almost open war between America and France, because the French Government seized and confiscated American ships for taking British goods into French harbours.

The Louisiana Purchase.—In 1801 the situation changed, because Napoleon was trying to make friends with the neutrals. Meanwhile, however (1800), he had bought Louisiana from Spain, with the idea of creating a new colonial empire—which would have been an unpleasant neighbour for the United States. But the outbreak of war with Britain made it impracticable to develop this idea; and in 1803 he sold Louisiana and its 60,000 inhabitants to the United States for something over £5,000,000.

America and the Blockade.—During the first years of the Napoleonic war, the Americans enjoyed immense prosperity, trading as neutrals freely with both sides. But when the struggle over the Continental System began (1806), the position was changed. Both sides were making things impossible for neutrals; but while Napoleon's restrictions were the more unjust, Britain's were the more effective, because they were enforced by the power of the navy, and it was against Britain that American anger was chiefly turned. Jefferson, now President, tried to force the hands of the combatants by forbidding American exports (1807); but this would merely have ruined American trade, and the embargo was withdrawn in 1809. In 1810 President Madison adopted a new device. He threw American trade open, but announced that if one of the belligerents should withdraw its restrictions, he would impose an embargo on trade with the other.

British-American War.—Napoleon saw in this a chance of enlisting the States on his side. He announced that he would

withdraw his decrees, so far as concerned America, if before a fixed date Britain cancelled her Orders in Council. That is to say, British trade was still to be excluded from Europe, but free access was to be given to American ships to import the needed goods. Naturally Britain would not agree to this one-sided arrangement. President Madison, after three months' notice, laid an embargo on British trade; and in June 1812, he declared war against Britain. By a stroke of irony, the declaration of war took place in the very month in which Napoleon started his march to Moscow. The Continental System had broken down; and—five days after the opening of the American war—Britain withdrew the Orders in Council, because they had served their purpose. Yet the war went on, largely because the States hoped to be able to conquer Canada while Britain was engaged in the death-grapple with Napoleon.

The War in Canada.—The war thus needlessly begun lasted for three years. In 1812 and 1813 its main feature was an attack by the Americans upon Canada, in which large forces were employed: some 500,000 troops were raised by the States during the war. But the Canadians defended themselves with great staunchness. The chief battle-ground was the Niagara peninsula, where the hard-fought but indecisive battle of *Lundy's Lane* * was fought in 1814. The American armies failed to make any advance into Canada. They were held at bay; and the struggle did much to strengthen Canadian patriotism.

Naval War.—Meanwhile there were a good many single-ship actions at sea, in which the Americans had many successes. And a swarm of American privateers crossed the Atlantic to prey upon British trade, using French ports as their bases. This went on throughout the three years when Europe was desperately struggling to throw off Napoleon's yoke. About 1,700 British ships were thus captured.

Invasion of the States.—In 1814, the Peninsular War being over, Britain was at last able to send troops to America. An army was taken by sea up the Potomac: it defeated the American army defending Washington, and the Capitol and the President's house were burned: an indefensible act of vandalism. At the beginning of 1815 a similar attack was directed against New Orleans: it was driven off with heavy loss. Before this battle was fought,

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 79*d*.

negotiators sitting at Ghent, in Belgium, had concluded a treaty of peace, which made no change whatsoever.

This was the most futile and wasteful of wars. Its only result was to embitter the relations between the two main groups of English-speaking peoples. To most Englishmen at the time it seemed to be a stab in the back, delivered when Britain was fighting for her life and for the freedom of the world. To most Americans it appeared to be a war in defence of the freedom of traffic on the seas, against the naval tyranny of Britain.

8. The Hundred Days

The Year of Peace.—When Napoleon had abdicated, and been sent to the little Mediterranean isle of Elba, all Europe believed that the nightmare of twenty years' war was at an end. Troops were disbanded ; ships returned from their endless vigil ; and (November 1814) the diplomats gathered at Vienna to re-settle the affairs of Europe and the world after the upheaval. Eleven months passed : the diplomats had reached the point of quarrelling over the spoils, and were beginning to range themselves in hostile groups, when startling news made them patch up their differences. Napoleon had returned.

Napoleon's Return.—He landed on the shore of France on March 4th, 1815. As he advanced towards Paris the nation gave him a hero's welcome and his veterans flocked to join him. The restored Bourbon king fled. On March 20th Napoleon was again master of Paris. But the Allies had made a new league for his overthrow. Before their armies were upon him he must achieve some great stroke. He took less than three months for preparation ; then (June 12th) started for Belgium, where the nearest enemy forces were. In the west of Belgium was an army under Wellington—half British, half Belgian, Dutch and German ; when all its reinforcements had come in it numbered 67,000. In the east of Belgium and the Rhine provinces was Blücher, with a Prussian army of over 100,000. Napoleon could dispose of 125,000. His plan was to strike at these two armies in turn, and prevent their joining. They had moved towards the frontier as he advanced, and were close together—Wellington's van at *Quatre Bras*, Blücher at *Ligny*. But their bases lay in different directions—Wellington's to the north-west, Blücher's to the north-east.

Waterloo Campaign.—Napoleon first struck hard at Blücher, and beat him back, while Marshal Ney held the British at Quatre Bras (June 16th). But Ney was too hard pressed to be able to detach troops to complete the victory over the Prussians, who made good their retreat. Wellington fell back in sympathy, and took up his position across the Brussels road, on low rising ground at *Waterloo*. Half of his army being untrustworthy, he would not have ventured to fight a pitched battle against Napoleon's superior force of veterans, but that Blücher had promised to be with him by midday on the 18th.

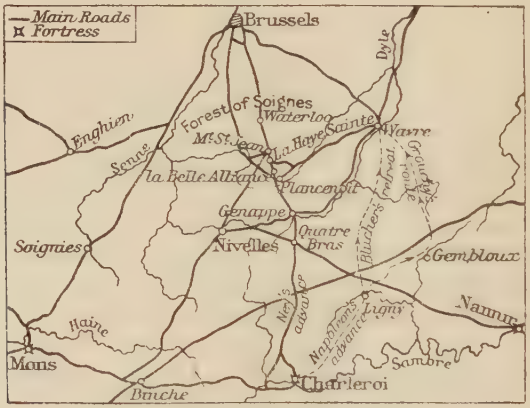

FIG. 35.—The Waterloo Campaign.

The Crowning Victory.—On the morning of the 18th, soon after eleven o'clock, Napoleon deployed his troops for his last battle.* He hurled charge after charge at the British lines along the slope. For five hours these hammer-blows went on, and still Blücher had not come. It was four o'clock before the Prussians were on the field, and half-past six before they made contact with the British left. But they came in the nick of time. The British troops were almost exhausted. All the reserves were in the line. Blücher's arrival made it possible to withdraw troops from the left to meet the final desperate attack of the Old Guard. It was repulsed, and then routed by a charge of the long-enduring infantry : " Up, Guards, and at

* For the campaign of Waterloo, see School Atlas, Plate 22*b* ; for the battle, School Atlas, Introduction, p. 15, fig. 14. There is a moving impression of the battle in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*.

'em ! " British and Prussian troops reached the headquarters of the French army almost at the same moment : the victory was complete.

Napoleon's Surrender.—Napoleon fled to Paris, and talked wildly of a levy *en masse* for further resistance. Even his marshals knew that further resistance was impossible. He fled from Paris, a fugitive. Blücher had announced a reward for his capture, and promised that he should be shot. He betook himself to Rochefort. There, out at sea, was a squadron of the British navy, still on guard. He surrendered to the navy which had from the beginning been the unconquerable obstacle to his ambitions ; and Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon* received his sword. Then he was sent as a captive to St. Helena, amid the limitless seas which had always baffled him. Thus ended, at the age of forty-six, the most dazzling career in human history.

CHAPTER XXXIX

AFTER THE WAR

1. The Settlement of Europe

The vast upheaval of the French Revolution and the long wars which followed it deeply affected the life of every people in Europe, and made, as it were, a fresh starting-point in history. It is necessary to understand the nature of the changes which this upheaval brought, because the future history both of the British peoples and of the world depended upon them.

An Unrestful Century. — Ancient landmarks which had seemed to be almost part of the order of Nature, such as the Holy Roman Empire and the Republic of Venice, had been swept away ; long-established boundaries had been changed ; time-honoured institutions and systems of government had been scrapped and remodelled. The habit of taking for granted, which had kept people content with the old ways during long centuries, had been disturbed ; and the result was that the next century, the nineteenth, was to be a period of greater and more rapid changes than any previous century.

Liberalism and Nationalism.—Great new ideas were fermenting in men's minds. One was the idea that men had a right to be consulted about the way in which they were governed : the

theory of the Divine Right of Kings, which had held sway since the sixteenth century, was dead, and the theory of the Divine Right of Peoples was taking its place ; it was gradually to conquer Europe during the nineteenth century. Another was the idea that the limits of States ought not to be fixed by the accidents of conquest or dynastic inheritance, but by the natural affinities and desires of the population : this was the idea of Nationality, and the aspirations of divided nations to be united and of subject nations to be free were to be among the moulding forces of the next era. National aspirations had long been vaguely at work in Europe, but the teachings of the French Revolution, and still more the fight of peoples for freedom from the sway of Napoleon, had given to them a new force. And there was also a third idea, to which the Revolution had given fresh potency : the idea that it was wrong that a small class should enjoy all the material goods of life without labour, while the mass of men and women toiled for little reward ; from this were to spring Socialism, and many other movements of social reform. Finally, there had already begun in Britain the profound change in the methods of wealth-making which is known as the Industrial Revolution : with the coming of peace it was soon to spread to other countries, and to bring about immense changes in the structure of society.

The Temper of Vienna.—When the long wars ceased, therefore, the world was only at the beginning, not at the end, of a period of great change. But the statesmen who gathered at Vienna in the Autumn of 1814, and resumed their sessions after Napoleon had been disposed of at Waterloo, had no appreciation of these great forces that were at work. They thought they had beaten down the revolutionary movement, and could get back to the old ways. They could not do so completely, but they did their best, and then endeavoured to make sure that there should never be any more change or disturbance. The result was that all their arrangements were overturned during the next hundred years. The history of the nineteenth century is largely the history of the destruction of the Vienna settlement.

The Big Three.—The Congress of Vienna was a scramble of competing interests. But three personalities dominated it. One was Alexander I of Russia, who, though he was a despot and very jealous of his power, had a shallow, sentimental sympathy with liberal ideas. The second was the Chancellor of Austria, Prince Metternich, who was the supreme representative of hidebound

reactionism. As the Austrian Empire was a medley of discordant nationalities, only held together by a despotic government, both the national movement and the demand for self-government seemed to be hostile to its interests. Metternich, therefore, did everything in his power to check and discourage these movements, especially in Germany and Italy, in which Austria was interested. The third leading figure was the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh.* He was essentially a man of moderation. He shared the dislike of his class and his party for all revolutionary movements; but, being an Englishman, he had some sympathy with national feeling, and hated despotism. The influence of Britain in these discussions was naturally very great, seeing that she alone had carried on the struggle from the beginning to the end; moreover, she was the most disinterested of the Great Powers, because she wanted nothing in Europe.

Treatment of France.—In the settlement with France, the Powers showed a wise moderation, for which the credit was mainly due to Castlereagh. The contrast between the treatment of France in 1815 and the treatment of Germany in 1919 is very marked. France was allowed to keep (roughly) the boundary which had existed when the revolution broke out. Britain restored to her most of her conquered colonies. An indemnity was imposed upon her, and an army of occupation was planted on her territory until it should be paid; but the indemnity was so moderate that France was able to pay it off in three years. Though the Bourbon line was restored, there was no attempt to restore the old feudal order, or the legal system, which the Revolution had destroyed; and a parliamentary system, modelled on that of Britain, was established under a charter granted by the restored King Louis XVIII.

The Netherlands and the Rhine.—To guard against future danger from France, the Austrian Netherlands (Belgium) were united with Holland, which became a kingdom.† This arrangement, which was made without consulting the Belgian people, lasted only fifteen years before it was destroyed by a revolt of the Belgians (1830). The lands in West Germany which Napoleon had turned into vassal States were, for the same reason, given to Prussia, ‡ instead of being

* There is a short Life of Castlereagh by J. A. R. Marriott, and a good essay on him by Lord Salisbury.

† For Europe after the Congress of Vienna, see School Atlas, Plate 19.

‡ For the re-settlement of Prussia after the Congress of Vienna, see School Atlas, Plate 19*b*.

restored to their original owners : thus Prussia became the watchdog against France instead of Austria, and in the long run this was to give Prussia the chance of seizing the leadership of Germany.

British Acquisitions.—With the exception of Britain, the Great Powers all rewarded themselves for their efforts by large acquisitions of territory in Europe, and the claims of "legitimacy" went by the board when they came in conflict with their ambitions. Britain kept the islands which she had taken as naval or smuggling bases during the war—Heligoland, Malta, and the Ionian Islands. Hanover also was enlarged and turned into a kingdom ; it was linked with the British Crown until 1837. But the main gains made by Britain were those she had made by her own efforts beyond the seas.

Russian Gains.—Russia kept Finland, which she had taken from Sweden in 1808 ; but as Sweden had fought against Napoleon, she had to be compensated, and Norway (separated from Denmark without any consultation with the people) was added to Sweden. This arrangement lasted until 1905, when the union of Sweden and Norway was peacefully dissolved. The Tsar also showed his devotion to the idea of nationality by insisting that Poland—dismembered by the three partitions of the eighteenth century *—should be re-established as a separate State. Accordingly, Napoleon's Grand Duchy of Warsaw was turned into a Kingdom of Poland, with a constitution. But the Crown was united with that of Russia, and the constitution was not long allowed to survive. Poland did not become an independent State until 1919.

Prussian Gains.—Prussia had to be compensated for the Polish lands she had given up. She got, besides wide and rich territories in western Germany, a great part of Saxony, which had foolishly been loyal to Napoleon. This made her much the greatest of the German States, the destined leader of Germany, and the inevitable rival of Austria.

Austria and Italy.—Austria rewarded herself for giving up the Netherlands by taking Dalmatia and the richest part of northern Italy †—Venetia and Lombardy ; while the lesser States of Italy, all restored as they had been in 1789, were all under Austrian influence. But the Italian people had begun to conceive the idea of

* School Atlas, Plate 29*b*.

† For the Austrian gains see School Atlas, Plates 19*a* and 25*d*.

Italian unity. They could not forget that Napoleon had created a Kingdom of Italy. These arrangements made Austria the inevitable foe of Italian nationalism, and exposed her to the wars by which Italian unity was created.

Germany.—In Germany the national idea was even more strongly at work than in Italy. But the Vienna arrangements seemed to deny it any chance of satisfaction. Though it was impossible to undo the simplification which Napoleon had carried out, there were still twenty-six separate States. In place of the old Holy Roman Empire they were linked together in a Germanic Confederation,* under Austrian presidency, the main purpose of which was to prevent any change. This arrangement lasted for half a century.

The Eastern Question.—No attempt was made to deal with the Turkish Empire, where national aspirations were already fermenting among the Christian peoples of the Balkan Peninsula—Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians, Rumanians. This was to be the source of frequent disturbance during the nineteenth century, and the direct cause of the next general European war—that of 1914.

The Holy Alliance.—Thus the opportunity of reorganising the European system which was open in 1815 was used by the Great Powers partly to aggrandise themselves, and partly to erect futile barriers against inevitable changes. The architects of this system had a sincere desire to secure permanent peace. They hoped to do so partly by making the Vienna settlement unalterable, and pledging all nations to regard it as sacred; partly by holding frequent conferences of representatives of the Great Powers to deal with each dangerous question as it arose. This was the origin of the "Concert of Europe," which played an important part in the affairs of Europe throughout the nineteenth century, and often averted war. But the Concert was limited to the Great Powers, who thus asserted a right of dictating to the world; and as, during the next thirty years, a majority among them were hostile to all liberal movements, their union was not lasting, and came to be regarded as the enemy of progress. In the emotion of the moment, Alexander of Russia asked his fellow-monarchs to join in a Holy Alliance, in which they pledged themselves to be guided in all their work by "the sacred principles of the Christian religion." The name of the Holy Alliance—which was pure sentimentalism and had no practical effect

* See School Atlas, Plate 28*d*.

—was popularly attached to the Concert of the Powers, and became a synonym for tyranny.

The Organisation of Peace.—Yet it ought not to be forgotten that these arrangements were inspired by a desire to make peace lasting and safe. They were a sort of crude anticipation of the League of Nations, a recognition that Europe needed some common authority if her civilisation was not to be ruined by war. In 1818 the Powers were so confident that their scheme would work that they announced, in the protocol of the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle, that "the era of permanent peace had arrived." In fact, their arrangements made many wars inevitable; and it was not an era of fixed and settled order, but of rapid change, largely brought about by wars and revolutions, which was now beginning.

2. The British Empire in 1815

The years of war had brought great changes not only in Europe, but in the non-European world.* The colonising and trade activities of the Continental States had perforce been brought to an end; and Britain had become the one supreme colonising and trading nation.

Disappearance of Colonial Empires. — During the war Britain had conquered all the colonial possessions of France, save San Domingo (Hayti), which had become an independent negro republic: Martinique, Guadeloupe, and St. Lucia in the West Indies; Bourbon, Mauritius, Rodriguez, and the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean; Pondicherry and Chandernagore in India. All these were restored at the peace except St. Lucia, Mauritius, and the Seychelles; but, in fact, the French colonial empire was now negligible. Britain had conquered Ceylon and Cape Colony from the Dutch in the first period of the war, and although Cape Colony was restored at the Peace of Amiens, it was reoccupied in 1806 and retained in 1815. In the second period of the war she had taken from the Dutch part of Dutch Guiana (which was retained), and the rich island of Java—the centre of the Dutch East Indian Empire—which was restored. Henceforward Dutch activity was limited to the Malay archipelago, and even here Britain was soon (1819) to acquire, in Singapore, the most valuable trade centre. At one moment Britain had even begun to conquer the Spanish American

* For the changes in the non-European world, see School Atlas, Plate 45*a*.

Empire, which lay at her mercy : an unsuccessful attack was made upon the Argentine in 1806, and an attack on Chile was designed. But these plans, if they were ever seriously conceived, were stopped by the outbreak of the Peninsular War, when Spain became the ally instead of the enemy of Britain.

Revolt of Spanish America.—During this period, however, the Spanish American colonies, having refused to recognise Joseph Bonaparte as their sovereign, became in practice independent.* They threw open their trade to Britain, and British merchants rapidly obtained almost a complete monopoly of South American trade. When the Bourbon monarchy was restored in Spain in 1815, it tried in vain to impose its authority upon the colonists. After some years of trouble, they established their independence ; and nothing remained of the Spanish colonial empire save Cuba and Porto Rico in the West Indies, and the Philippines in the far east. It was already pretty clear, in 1815, that this was going to happen.

British Monopoly.—Thus all the historic colonial empires of the European Powers had shrunk to the smallest dimensions. Everywhere the belief was current that colonies were not worth acquiring, because sooner or later they must be lost. For more than sixty years to come, the European nations, engrossed by their own problems, disregarded the non-European world almost completely, and left a practical monopoly of oversea trade and empire in the hands of Britain.

The New British Empire.—In 1815, thanks very largely to the war, the British Empire had already become the most amazing series of possessions that had ever been brought under a single government in the history of the world ; and this was less than a generation after the loss of the first British Empire by the revolt of the American colonies. The emergence of this gigantic structure was perhaps the most remarkable outcome of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. But each part of it presented problems of great and varied difficulty—problems far more difficult than those which had caused the revolt of the United States—and it remained to be seen whether any means of holding all these territories together could be devised.

(1) **Canada.**—The six self-governing colonies of Canada had just repelled the attacks of the United States, and were full of loyalty. But they were economically stagnant ; their progress could not

* For South America, see School Atlas, Plate 52*c*.

compare with that of the United States. Moreover, bad feeling was growing up between the French and the English settlers ; and there was already a good deal of friction between the nominated governors and their elected assemblies.

(2) **The West Indies.**—The West Indian group of colonies—Jamaica, the Bahamas, the Leeward and Windward Islands, Barbados, British Guiana, and British Honduras—had enjoyed a period of very great prosperity during the war. But they depended upon slave-labour, and the movement against slavery was very strong in Britain, where the stoppage of the slave trade in 1807 was promptly followed by an agitation for the emancipation of all slaves within the Empire. British feeling against slavery was now so strong that Lord Castlereagh had to make it one of his chief aims, both in 1815 and later, to persuade all the powers to prohibit the slave trade. If the dominant power insisted upon abolition, there was bound to be trouble in the West Indies.

(3) **Australia.**—The distant settlements in Australia were as yet little more than convict-stations, though sheep-breeding had been introduced during the war, and had shown how immense were the possibilities of that vast, empty land. But a whole continent could not be left unpeopled, or reserved for convicts, and the journey was so long and costly that the problem of peopling it seemed to be almost insoluble.

(4) **South Africa.**—In South Africa Britain had recently acquired a very rich and fertile land, suitable for white settlers. But the existing white population consisted of Dutch Boers, who not only resented foreign domination, but held views about the treatment of the natives widely different from those to which the humanitarian movement had given birth in England. Moreover, hordes of warlike Kaffirs, the advance-guard of the great Bantu race, were pressing down upon the colony. Thus a double racial problem, of great acuteness, had to be solved.

(5) **India.**—In India Britain had recently and suddenly become the paramount power over a thickly populated country as big as Europe, leaving out Russia. This empire presented a problem of government to which there has been no parallel in human history ; and not the least difficult part of it was the question whether it was not necessary to complete the subjugation of the still unconquered princes (notably the Marathas) before settled peace and justice could be made secure in India.

Links of Empire.—Besides these five main blocks of territory, each of which constituted a gigantic empire, and which were distributed over every continent, the British Empire also already included a large number of islands and trading-posts, scattered over all the seas of the world : Heligoland, Gibraltar, Malta, and the Ionian Islands in Europe, St. Helena, Ascension and Tristan d'Acunha in the Atlantic, the Falkland Islands off the coast of South America, Mauritius and the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean. These were the links of an empire that rested on sea-power.

This mighty fabric had mainly been built up during the lifetime of men who were alive in 1815. Its existence placed Britain in a unique position among the nations of the world, and made her the greatest of them all. But was there in the British people a sufficient stock of wisdom and character to find the means of keeping together and ruling efficiently this amazing empire ? Nine out of ten observers abroad, if not at home, reflecting upon what had already happened to all the other colonial empires, would in 1815 have answered this question in the negative.

3. The State of Britain in 1815

British Wealth.—On a superficial view, the position of Britain was as splendid as the oversea empire she had acquired. She was the unchallengeable mistress of the seas. Her trading vessels were to be seen in every port of the world. She had a monopoly of the new processes of manufacture, and they were yielding her immense wealth. She, alone among the nations, could command a supply of capital sufficient for the greatest undertakings. She had become the world's workshop and market. Her nobles and merchants were as rich as princes. Nowhere in the world was such luxury to be seen as in London : "What a city to loot !" said Blücher, when he visited it after the peace.

British Poverty.—But beneath the surface a very different state of things was revealed. A great proportion of the British people were sunk in a squalid poverty such as their fathers had not known in modern times. The towns in which her wealth was created, the new manufacturing towns of the north and midlands, were incredibly mean, ugly, and unhealthy. Her population was increasing by leaps and bounds—it had grown 35 per cent. since the war began, while the population of France had increased only 11 per

cent. But most of this growing population were living in conditions which promised to turn them into a stunted and unhealthy race. They were working incredibly long hours for incredibly low wages—so low that some 10 per cent. of the population had to receive allowances from the Poor Law in supplement of their wages if they were to keep body and soul together. Even their children, infants of eight years old, were in many cases working fourteen hours a day to earn a pittance of a few pence. Yet there were tens of thousands who could get no work at all. The vast wealth which Britain had learnt how to make was not bringing well-being to the mass of her people. It was going into the pockets of a small rich class. And there was a horrible gulf fixed between the prosperous classes and the labouring mass. The widely diffused comfort which had been a feature of "Merry England" had vanished. Cobbett,* that vivid journalist, complained that the well-fed peasantry he had known in his youth had been replaced by a population of starvelings, living in hovels and feeding on slops and tea.

Causes of Distress.—This had been the result of the agrarian and industrial revolutions, complicated by Napoleon's Continental System. The agrarian revolution had increased the supply of food grown from English soil, but not sufficiently to balance the rapid increase of population; and it had at the same time reduced the peasantry to the level of a wage-earning proletariat living on subsistence wages, which were kept down by the influence of the poor-law system. Meanwhile the Continental blockade had increased the difficulty of importing foodstuffs, and prices had soared up. The Industrial Revolution had immensely increased the amount of goods that could be produced by a given amount of labour. During the blockade the power-loom had come into wide use alongside of the spinning-jenny and the mule, while the use of the steam-engine and the development of improved methods of iron working had made giant strides. These changes alone had enabled British traders to face the risks and cost of running the blockade, and still to undersell all competitors. They had made it possible for the volume of British exports to be kept fairly level in spite of the blockade. But when the machines were enabling one man to do the work of two, it was not enough to keep sales at a steady level. They must grow.

* There is a good Life of Cobbett by E. I. Carlile. Cobbett's *Advice to Young Men* is a racy little book well worth reading, and largely autobiographical.

The blockade prevented them from growing. It consequently created a large surplus of unemployed labour, whose pitiful competition for jobs kept wages very low. And as the State would not endeavour to protect the workers itself, and prohibited them by the Combination Acts from trying to protect themselves by forming trade unions, there seemed to be no remedy.

Menace of Revolution. — In this wealthy and victorious nation, which held sway over so large a part of the world, mere misery was driving many of the working-class into a sort of blind revolt. During the years of the Continental blockade there were risings to destroy the machinery which seemed to be ruining the workers—the Luddite riots of 1811 and 1812. In fact, the condition of a great number of the British people in 1815 was probably worse than the condition of the French peasantry before the Revolution. And at any time during the quarter of a century after 1815 a violent revolution seemed not only possible but probable in Britain. It would have come if the British people had not been incredibly steady, patient, and enduring.

The Landowning Oligarchy.—Over this mass of wealth and misery ruled a self-complacent oligarchy of landowners who had been immensely enriched by the rising price of food, and by the squalid towns which had grown up on their land. Every cry of discontent seemed to them an expression of that "revolutionary spirit" against which they had fought with such admirable tenacity. Because the nation was ceasing to be mainly agricultural, and because the mass of even the agricultural population had been severed from all rights in the land, the landowners were no longer the natural leaders of the nation, as they had been until the middle of the eighteenth century. They no longer represented its main interests, or understood its new and great problems. Yet their power seemed to be solidly entrenched. They ruled through a Parliament whose hereditary house was entirely composed of great landowners, and whose nominally representative house was not in any true sense representative at all, a large proportion of its constituencies being "pocket" boroughs or "rotten" boroughs. This system ought to have been reformed long before. It would have been reformed but for the coming of the French Revolution. Now all talk of the necessity for reform was regarded as evidence of a "revolutionary spirit," to be sternly repressed. Yet the only hope of reform without revolution was that this unrepresentative Parliament should consent

to reform itself. It is no wonder that many thought revolution inevitable.

Radical Movements.—The demand for reform had been silenced during the first period of the war. But during the Napoleonic struggle it had come alive again. There was an active "Radical" movement afoot. It even had one or two members in the House of Commons, notably Sir Francis Burdett. All over the country the indefatigable "Orator Hunt" and other speakers were demanding radical reform and the introduction of democracy; and innumerable "Hampden Clubs" to forward this end were being formed. In 1802 the eccentric William Cobbett, most trenchant of writers, had turned Radical, and in his vigorous *Weekly Political Register*, which from 1816 was published at twopence, was denouncing the evils of the existing system and the crimes of the borough-mongers. Throughout the country his influence was immense: more than any other man, he stimulated and expressed the angry discontents of the time. Meanwhile, the philosopher Bentham and a group of disciples were working out elaborate plans of reform: they had no great popular audience, but they did more than any other group to indicate practical methods of redress. A powerful school of economic thinkers were also at work, demanding great changes in the fiscal system of the country, and especially the substitution of free trade for the elaborate protectionist system which, in their view, was preventing the expansion of British trade. And soon a more sweeping demand for change was to become prominent. Thomas Spence, a Newcastle workman, had long been preaching land nationalisation as a cure for the nation's ills, and there were many Spencean Societies up and down the country. In 1815 Robert Owen, a Lanarkshire manufacturer who had done his best to create improved conditions for his own workpeople, began to preach the necessity for a social revolution as the only means of ensuring that the wealth created by the industry of the whole nation should be diffused over the whole nation. He was the father of "Socialism," though the word had not yet been coined.

The Need for Reform.—Thus a formidable ferment was already at work among the British people when the war came to an end. It was not only the sufferings of the working-class, the wretched conditions of the industrial towns, the grossly unrepresentative character of the system of government, that needed amendment. Every part of the legal and social system of the country needed to be overhauled: not least the hideous penal code, which (inspired by the

fear of revolution) imposed the penalty of death for innumerable petty offences such as stealing linen from a bleaching-ground or being seen at night with one's face blacked ; or the game laws, which had been made more and more ferocious as the landowners spent more of their growing wealth upon game preservation, and the starving peasantry netted the game for food ; or the exclusive privileges of the Established Church, with its richly endowed episcopate and its impoverished lower clergy ; or the monstrous imperfections of the police system, which allowed crime to breed unchecked in the festering alleys of the towns. Almost every aspect of the nation's life demanded reconstruction.

The defeat of Napoleon, therefore, did not mean the end of the revolutionary movement in Britain any more than in Europe. On the contrary, a revolution had to come. The only question was, whether it would come peacefully or by violence. And that depended upon whether the ruling class would open its eyes, or would display the same unyielding tenacity in resisting change at home that it had displayed in resisting the might of Napoleon.

The End of the Old Regime.—In truth, the close of the Napoleonic War may be said to mark, in England as in Europe, the end of the old regime of hereditary class ascendancy. The governing class in England had been less exclusive, more public-spirited, and more liberal in its outlook than the ruling classes in other countries ; and for that reason its power, exercised through Parliament, had been more willingly accepted than in any other country. Indeed, the power of the landowning aristocracy had never been more complete nor its pride greater than in these last days of its supremacy, when it led the nation's resistance to the menace of foreign conquest. But it had already been seriously undermined, by the ideas of the French Revolution, by the teaching of many schools of reformers in England, and, above all, by the great social changes which the Industrial Revolution was bringing about. It was bound to come to an end. The gradual transition from aristocracy to democracy is the main interest of the nineteenth century, and gives to it its distinctive character.

Supplementary Reading on Book VII

The ground covered by this Book is dealt with, much more fully, in the *Short History of the British Commonwealth*, Vol. II, pp. 147 to 324. See also Grant Robertson, *England under the Hanoverians*. For Indian

affairs, V. A. Smith, *Oxford History of India*, and Muir, *Making of British India*. The best general account of the Industrial Revolution is by a Frenchman, P. Mantoux (English trans.). On the changes in agriculture, Lord Ernle's *English Farming, Past and Present*. There are good summaries of European history during the period in Morse Stephens' *Revolutionary Europe*, and Holland Rose's *Revolutionary and Napoleonic Epoch*. Holland Rose's *Life of Napoleon* (2 vols.), and his two volumes on Pitt are full and useful. A stimulating book on the period is Fortescue's *British Statesmen of the Great War*. J. L. and B. Hammond's *Village Labourer* and *Town Labourer* are full of vivid detail on social conditions. The best general account of the French Revolution in one volume is by Madelin (English translation).

BOOK VIII

NATIONAL AND IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION

(1815–1880)

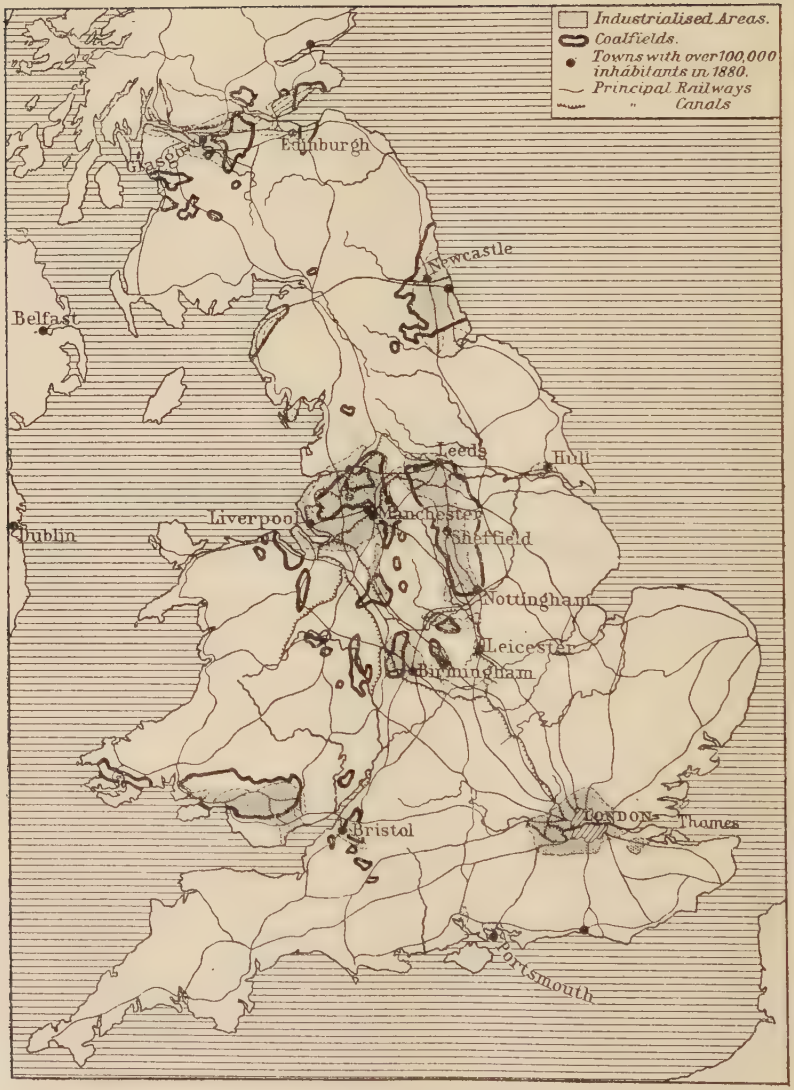

FIG. 36.—The Industrial Revolution.

BOOK VIII

NATIONAL AND IMPERIAL RECONSTRUCTION (1815–1880)

Britain and the British Empire as we know them to-day have been mainly shaped by the changes of the nineteenth century. During that century the British people ceased to be a nation chiefly composed of country-dwellers, ruled by a landowning oligarchy, and became a nation chiefly composed of town-dwellers, ruled by the system of democracy. During the same period the British Empire ceased to be an empire in the old sense of the term, and became a loosely linked fellowship of free peoples, marked by an infinite diversity of type ; at the same time its area was greatly extended, and there was an immense increase of the English-speaking population in the vast areas which it included.

These momentous changes were due in the first instance to the rapid development of the Industrial Revolution, and to the unprecedented increase of population and wealth which it brought. But the form which the group of British nations assumed was determined by a deliberate process of reconstruction, which affected every aspect of their social and political life. The fact that this revolution was peacefully and gradually achieved has largely obscured its greatness ; but it is impossible to form any just view of the history of the British peoples without some understanding of the significance of these changes.

The two generations during which this immense change was being effected may be divided into three sections : first, a period of challenge and unrest from 1815 to 1830 ; next, a period of reconstruction, from 1830 to about 1850 ; finally, a period of self-complacency and of growing prosperity, from about 1850 to about 1880.

While the British peoples were undergoing these great changes, and were enjoying a supremacy of wealth and influence which gave to them the first place in the world, the peoples of Europe, and even of the United States of America, were passing through cruel ordeals of war and revolution. Britain became the envy and the model of the old world ; and in almost every civilised country her institutions and her social system were more or less closely imitated. But towards the close of the period the European peoples, having overcome, for the moment, their own troubles, awoke to the fact that the destinies of the world outside Europe were largely passing under the control of the English-speaking peoples. This realisation opened a new period both of British and of world history, and began a fierce rivalry for imperial power which led up to the Great War.

CHAPTER XL

OLD TORYISM AND YOUNG TORYISM (1815–1830)

1. The Years of Blind Reaction (1815–1822)

It was universally expected that the return of peace in 1815 would bring with it prosperity and plenty. The reverse happened ; and the years which immediately followed the great triumph of Waterloo were perhaps the most unhappy in the modern history of the British peoples. The distress of the war years, instead of being alleviated, was intensified. The defects of the unreformed system of government became so apparent that it completely lost the confidence of the nation, and a revolution by violence seemed all but inevitable.

The Distress of 1815.—All sections of the nation shared in the miseries of the time. Expecting a great increase of foreign sales after the peace, manufacturers had heaped up stocks of goods ; but the Continent was too much impoverished to buy. There were numerous bankruptcies ; factories closed down ; and the numbers of the unemployed went up by leaps and bounds. Many trades were hard hit by the sudden cessation of war orders. The disbandment of the army increased the volume of unemployment. Even the farmers, who had enjoyed immense prosperity during the war, and had brought

a great deal of poor land into cultivation, were panic-struck at the prospect of an inrush of cheap foreign corn.

The Royal Family.—The Government which had to deal with this difficult situation was wholly unfitted for the task The old king had been insane since 1810, and was also blind and deaf.* His eldest son, the Regent, was a contemptible and dissolute fop, whose relations with his errant wife were a matter of public scandal ; and his younger brothers were not much better. Princess Charlotte, the Regent's daughter and the heir to the throne, was regarded as the hope of the nation ; but she died in 1817. Then there was a rush among the younger princes to get married. But until Princess Victoria, daughter of the Duke of Kent, was born in 1819, it seemed likely that the royal line would become extinct, and many anticipated that the monarchy also would disappear.†

The Government.—As for the administration, its head, Lord Liverpool, was a colourless figure ; and it was dominated by three men who came to be hated with an extraordinary intensity—Castlereagh, Eldon, and Sidmouth. Lord Castlereagh,‡ the Foreign Secretary, was a much misunderstood man, but he was unquestionably a reactionary in home politics. Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, was a great (though a very dilatory) lawyer ; but his creed was that which was once pithily expressed by the Duke of York—" any change, at any time, for any purpose, is much to be deprecated." Lord Sidmouth (who, as Addington, had been Prime Minister in 1801–1803) was a second-rate and unimaginative man ; and unfortunately he was, as Home Secretary, responsible for public order. Ridden by the nightmare of revolution, he believed in the existence of an underground conspiracy to overthrow the Government, and took every cry of distress for a tocsin of revolution. He worked largely through paid spies and informers, who fabricated evidence when it was not otherwise forthcoming, and kept the Government in a profitable state of alarm.

The Corn Law.—With one exception, the Government had no remedy to propose for the distresses of the time, save stern repression. The exception was the distress among farmers, which affected the landlords' rents. To meet this, a new *Corn Law* was carried

* Thackeray draws a touching picture of him in *The Four Georges*.

† See Genealogical Table C, at the end of the volume.

‡ There is a short Life of Castlereagh by J. A. R. Marriott, and a good essay on him by Lord Salisbury.

through Parliament in 1815. It prohibited the importation of corn until the price in England reached eighty shillings a quarter. Thus, at a time of acute distress, low wages and widespread unemployment, the price of bread was artificially kept high, and the people were deprived of the one immediate consequence of peace which might have alleviated their sufferings—cheap food.

The Disturbances of 1815–1820.—During the years 1815 to 1820 there was a series of disturbances. None of them was formidable. Some of them were deliberately fomented by informers. All of them were easily suppressed. But ministers spoke as if revolution was brewing, and *Habeas Corpus* was suspended. In 1816 there was a riot after a Radical meeting at Spa Fields, and the spies swore that the rioters meant to seize the Tower of London ; a handful of constables broke up the crowd. In 1817 a few hundred starving workmen set out to walk from Lancashire to London to present a petition to the Regent, carrying their blankets to sleep in. The "Blanketeers," as they were called, were turned back by a few troops, and some of them were imprisoned for months without trial. In the same year a more serious rising of a few hundred men in Derbyshire was easily stopped by eighteen hussars ; it was proved to have been instigated by the infamous spy Oliver. In 1819 a big Radical demonstration in favour of parliamentary reform, held at St. Peter's Fields, Manchester, was actually charged by the yeomanry, and several lives were lost. This was known as the *Massacre of Peterloo ;** and when Sidmouth congratulated the magistrates on their vigour, moderate opinion was outraged. To deal with these troubles, the Government introduced a group of measures known as the *Six Acts* (1819), which forbade all public meetings unless summoned by those in authority. Finally, in 1820, a murderous conspiracy (known as the *Cato Street Conspiracy*) was formed to kill the whole Cabinet. This was the only serious outrage of these years ; and it was provoked by foolish repression.

George IV and his Queen.—Meanwhile (January 1820) old George III had died, having long been dead to the world ; and was succeeded by his worthless son, George IV. The new king's first act was to refuse royal rights to his queen, and to get the ministry to introduce a Bill of Pains and Penalties in the House of Lords to

* These events are vividly described in Sam Bamford's *Passages in the Life of a Radical*—an honest book, well worth reading.

divorce her. Popular sympathy was so violently on the side of the queen that the Bill had to be withdrawn ; and the unsavoury episode completed the discredit of the whole system of government. It was in this year that Shelley wrote *The Masque of Anarchy*, in which he scarified the rulers of Britain, and called upon the "men of England" to "rise like lions out of slumber, in unvanquishable number : cast your chains to earth, like dew ; ye are many, they are few."

The End of Reaction.—The Government of reaction sank under the weight of obloquy. Sidmouth resigned in 1822 ; Castlereagh, a victim of morbid depression, committed suicide in the same year ; and although Lord Liverpool continued to be Prime Minister, the men who now took the lead in his Cabinet changed its character, and began the era of reform. They were the abler Tories of the younger school, notably Canning,* his friend Huskisson, and Sir Robert Peel. † Already, indeed, improvement had begun when, in 1819, on the advice of a Committee over which Peel presided, cash payments were resumed, and the inconvertible paper currency established in 1797 came to an end. This meant that money became more valuable, prices fell, and wages went a little farther.

2. Tory Reformers (1822–1828)

The years from 1822 to 1828 brought a very marked change in the spirit of British politics, both at home and abroad.

Canning's Foreign Policy.—At the Foreign Office, Canning was responsible for a definite breach with the reactionary powers of Europe, popularly known as the "Holy Alliance." In 1820 and 1821 there had been a series of futile revolutions in Spain and Italy. Metternich, Chancellor of Austria, and the Powers were for sending armies to stamp out these movements, and actually did so. Castlereagh had privately resisted in vain, urging a policy of non-intervention ; but he had been loth to break with the alliance of the Powers. Canning publicly protested, broke with the Alliance, and won the gratitude of Liberals throughout Europe. When the Powers proposed to send forces to reduce the revolting South

* There is a short Life of Canning by H. V. Temperley.

† There is a short Life of Peel by J. R. Thursfield (Twelve English Statesmen).

American republics to obedience, Canning formally recognised the republics as independent States, and let it be known that the British navy would not permit any expedition against them. In a grandiose phrase, he claimed to have "called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old." He also urged the United States of America to take similar action; and in a message to Congress President Monroe announced that the United States would resist any intervention in South America by European Powers. This was the first promulgation of the famous "*Monroe Doctrine.*"

Greek Independence.—Even more striking was Canning's action on the Greek question. In 1821 the Greeks had revolted against Turkey. Many English and French volunteers had gone out to help them, the most famous among them being Lord Byron, the poet, who lost his life in the Greek cause at Mesolonghi (1824). In 1825, however, the Greeks were very hard pressed: a fleet and an army from Egypt threatened not only to defeat them but to exterminate them. Thereupon (1826) Canning made an agreement with France and Russia to compel the Sultan to grant autonomy to the Greeks. A joint fleet, under the British Admiral Codrington, was sent to enforce these demands. At *Navarino* (1827) it destroyed the Egyptian fleet, and in the next year a combined French and British force cleared the Morea. In 1829 Greece was recognised as independent, under the protection of Britain, France, and Russia.* This was the first triumph of the cause of nationalism. Both in South America and in Greece, Britain had appeared as the friend of the movement of emancipation abroad. She could not remain committed to reaction at home.

Law and Trade Reforms.—Meanwhile, Peel, as Home Secretary, had swept away Sidmouth's wretched spy system. He also did very valuable work in revising the iniquitous Penal Code. No less than one hundred capital offences were abolished, and the British legal system was redeemed from the savagery which had disgraced it. Huskisson, at the Board of Trade, took in hand the tariff, revised and greatly reduced the customs duties, sweeping away the taxes on raw materials; and made a substantial step in the direction of free trade. Huskisson also abandoned the prohibition of the export of machinery, which had been forbidden with the idea that foreigners ought not to be helped to use British machines. The

* See School Atlas, Plates 19 and 26*e*.

trade in machinery soon became one of the greatest of British trades.

The Freeing of Trade Unions.—The most remarkable advance of these years was not due to the Government, but to the work of Francis Place,* a London tailor and a disciple of the Radical philosopher, Bentham. Working in conjunction with Joseph Hume, a Radical member of Parliament, he managed to obtain an inquiry into the working of Pitt's Combination Acts, which prohibited the formation of Trade Unions. The evidence was so skilfully presented that even a Tory committee reported in favour of the repeal of the Acts. They were repealed in 1824; and although, after an outbreak of strikes, the Act was modified in 1825, nevertheless the establishment of Trade Unions had become legally possible. This was an event of the highest importance for the future development of the British social system.

The Canningite Split.—In 1827 Lord Liverpool died, and Canning became Prime Minister in his place. But this led to a split in the Tory party, because, while Canning favoured Catholic Emancipation, the majority of the Tories, including Peel, opposed it; and Canning was only able to form his Government with the help of the Whigs. In a few months, Canning died; an attempt to carry on his ministry under his friend Lord Goderich was a failure; and in 1828 the Duke of Wellington † became Prime Minister, with Peel as his right-hand man. Some of Canning's followers (including Lord Palmerston and William Lamb, afterwards Lord Melbourne, both of whom later became Liberal Prime Ministers) were at first included in the ministry. But the breach was too deep: in three months they had resigned and thrown in their lot with the Whigs. The Tory ascendancy was beginning to crumble.

Police Reform.—Even under the Wellington government, reform still went on. On the motion of Lord John Russell,‡ a future Liberal leader who now first obtained political prominence, the *Test and Corporation Acts*, which had survived from the intolerance of the seventeenth century, were repealed, and the disabilities of the Dissenters were at last removed. And Peel carried out a piece of

* There is a very interesting Life of Place by Graham Wallas.

† There is an essay on the Duke of Wellington as a statesman, by Sir Charles Oman, in Hearnshaw's *Prime Ministers of the Nineteenth Century*.

‡ There is an essay on Russell, by W. F. Reddaway, in Hearnshaw's *Prime Ministers of the Nineteenth Century*.

work which deserved to rank with the reform of the Penal Code, when he organised the Metropolitan Police, and the old incompetent bodies of watchmen who had failed to keep crime in check disappeared. Other towns imitated London ; and the admirable new police forces, in honour of Sir Robert Peel, came to be known as " bobbies " or " peelers."

The more reactionary Tories were beginning to be restive under this reforming activity. But perhaps Peel would have achieved more good work, to demonstrate that the old unreformed system of government was still capable of good things, if his policy, and the existence of the Wellington ministry, had not been interrupted by a series of events which before very long broke down the Tory ascendancy altogether, and opened the way for more far-reaching constructive work.

3. Catholic Emancipation and the Irish Problem

The Condition of Ireland.—The cause of disturbance came from Ireland. Since the Act of Union little attention had been paid to the needs of Ireland, the Irish representatives in the united Parliament being all members of the Protestant minority. But there were very great evils in the condition of Ireland, which demanded attention. The population was too great for the means of subsistence ; it had reached 7,000,000 in 1821 ; and the great majority of these, the disinherited Irish peasantry, were in a state of abject and grinding poverty, worse than that of any peasantry in Europe. The competition for land was so fierce that rack-rents were paid which left no sufficient margin for livelihood, and the people lived mainly on potatoes, the cheapest form of human food. They were always on the verge of starvation, and a very severe famine, which caused serious loss of life, happened in 1822. Again, it was a bitter grievance that one-tenth of all the produce of these wretched little farms was exacted as tithe for the maintenance of the Anglican Church, to which scarcely any of the peasantry belonged. Finally, though since 1793 Irish Catholics (unlike those of England) had the right to vote for members of Parliament, they could not be elected, nor could they hold any public office. They therefore could not do anything to improve the lot of their fellows.

O'Connell.—Ever since the Act of Union there had been acute division in English politics between the majority of the Tories, who

were opposed to Catholic Emancipation (*i.e.* the conferment upon Catholics of the right to hold public offices and to sit in Parliament), and the Whigs and Canningite Tories, who were in favour of such a measure : this was, in truth, the main line of cleavage in English politics. Meanwhile, in Ireland, a Catholic Board kept the question alive by petitions and in other ways. In 1805 the leadership of this movement was assumed by Daniel O'Connell, a very successful lawyer and an orator of great power.* He contrived to give new force and vigour to the movement. In 1823, moved by the famine of the previous year, he founded a Catholic Association, supported by a regular weekly levy called the Catholic Rent. Thousands of Catholic peasants joined, and excitement steadily increased. In the north of Ireland Orange Lodges were organised on the other side, and feeling ran so high that the authorities feared an outbreak of civil war, with all the horrors that have always accompanied civil war in Ireland. They tried to prohibit the organisations on both sides (1825) ; but this was of no avail. O'Connell dissolved his Association, but formed a new one within the letter of the law.

The Clare Election.—In 1828 a bye-election was necessitated in County Clare. The outgoing member was a popular Protestant landlord, who had always been able to count upon the votes of his Catholic tenants. O'Connell resolved to try a great experiment. He became a candidate himself, although, as a Catholic, he was legally disqualified ; and he was triumphantly elected. What had happened at Clare was likely to happen, at the next election, in eight out of ten Irish constituencies. Either O'Connell must be admitted to Parliament, which meant that Catholic Emancipation must be granted ; or the Government must be prepared to face the disfranchisement of four-fifths of Ireland, and the rise of an intense excitement which would almost certainly lead to civil war.

Catholic Emancipation.—Wellington and Peel, the heads of the Government, were both opposed to Emancipation. But Wellington was a soldier, who knew when a position was untenable ; and Peel had an honest mind which would not refuse to face facts. Both agreed that emancipation must be granted. Peel wanted to resign, to save his personal honour. Wellington insisted that as their

* There is an excellent Life of O'Connell in Lecky's *Leaders of Irish Public Opinion*. There is also a Life by Judge O'Connor Morris in the Heroes of the Nations Series.

influence alone could force the Tories to accept the hated Act, the national need must come first. Accordingly the statesmen who had refused to support Canning because he advocated the Catholic cause, now introduced a Bill to secure the triumph of that cause. It was carried with the aid of Whig and Canningite votes ; and Catholics became eligible for Parliament and for all but three public offices.

Fall of the Tories.—The passage of the Catholic Emancipation Act, coming on the top of other reform measures, rent the Tory party in twain, and destroyed its faith in its leaders. In the next year, 1830, George IV died ; and the accession of his brother, William IV, made a general election necessary. That election was one of the turning-points in British history. It returned a Whig majority ; and the Whigs were committed to parliamentary reform, which, in the eyes of Tories, meant political revolution. Moreover, in the same year, revolutions broke out in France, Belgium, Italy, and Poland. Revolution was in the air. Could the necessary changes be peacefully achieved ?

4. Colonial Policy (1815–1830)

Large-scale Emigration. — The development of the new British Empire was deeply influenced by the course of events in Britain. Unemployment and distress led to emigration on a very large scale—the first movement of mass-emigration yet seen in the modern era. It was after the famine of 1822 that large-scale emigration from Ireland began. A very large proportion of these emigrants went to the United States ; and the rapid growth of the States in this period, when the Mississippi valley was being very quickly settled, was mainly due to conditions in Britain. But there was also a strong movement towards Canada—as many as 20,000 a year ; and for the first time a steady though small stream of free emigrants flowed to Australia, where in 1828 a new settlement was made on the west coast, at Swan River.* In 1819 organised and assisted emigration began, when, as a means of relieving unemployment, Government supplied £50,000 to defray the cost of a British settlement in South Africa. The area chosen was Eastern Cape Colony, round Grahamstown : † this region is still the most English district in

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*b*.
† See School Atlas, Plate 56*b*.

South Africa, and its new inhabitants formed the first solid block of English-speaking settlers among the Dutch Boers.

Racial Problems.—This new stream of emigration produced its own problems in all the colonies. Racial feeling was stirred not only in South Africa but in Canada, where the French of Quebec began to fear that the English would soon outnumber them. In Australia the coming of substantial numbers of free settlers made it necessary to modify the form of government appropriate for a convict station. In 1824, therefore, a nominated legislative council was set up in New South Wales, and next year Tasmania was organised as a separate colony.

Movement against Slavery.—Not only in the lands suited for white settlement, but in the old and new tropical possessions, changes were beginning. The chief agents of the change were the missionaries, of whom hundreds were now scattered over the face of the globe. Their reports, sent home to the Churches whose subscriptions supported them, stirred public interest in the backward or primitive peoples, and in the slaves of the slave-owning colonies. After the abolition of the slave trade, an agitation had begun for the abolition of slavery. It reached an important stage in 1823, when T. F. Buxton moved a resolution in the House of Commons condemning slavery, and Canning, on behalf of the Government, undertook to impose upon the various colonies regulations for the protection of the slaves. The planters were indignant at this threatened interference with their "property," and Jamaica even threatened to secede from the Empire. Most of the planters were inclined to lay the blame on the missionaries. In Demerara there was a rising among the slaves when they heard that something was to be done for them. It was cruelly suppressed; and the Rev. John Smith, a Nonconformist missionary, was tried and condemned to death for inciting the slaves to mutiny, though he had done nothing to justify such a charge. He died of the hardships inflicted upon him in prison. Every church and chapel in Britain rang with the story of his martyrdom; and this episode, more than anything else, brought the British people to the conviction that slavery must be abolished.

Evidently difficult questions were brewing both in the white men's colonies and in the tropical colonies. By 1830 reconstruction had become as inevitable in the colonies as at home.

5. India: the Overthrow of the Marathas

Finally, in India, great events were taking place during the years following Waterloo. It is scarcely too much to say that in this period the British conquest of India was completed.

Marathas and Pindaris.—When Wellesley was recalled in 1805 (p. 486) he had not completed the subjugation of the Maratha princes, who still controlled nearly half, though mostly the wildest and least civilised half, of India; and the home authorities gave strict injunctions to his successors that there was to be no interference with the Marathas. For eight years this prohibition was observed. During that time the Marathas gave protection within their territories to bands of wild and savage marauders, known as Pindaris, who frequently raided and plundered territories for whose protection the East India Company had made itself responsible. The neglect to deal with this evil was highly discreditable to the British power. At the same time Bengal suffered a good deal from raids by the warlike Gurkhas, who inhabited the kingdom of Nepal on the southern slopes of the Himalayas. "Non-intervention" in Indian politics was in fact an impossible policy for the power that was now paramount in India.

Lord Hastings and the Gurkhas.—In 1813 there came out to India a new Governor-General, Lord Moira, afterwards Marquess Hastings,* who deserves to rank, after Clive, Warren Hastings, and Wellesley, as the fourth of the great builders of the Indian Empire. He refused to observe the policy of non-intervention, and dealt very vigorously with the forces of disorder in India. First he attacked the Gurkhas, defeated them in difficult mountain campaigns, drove them back into their hill-country, and made with them a treaty (1816) which has lasted to this day. Ever since then Gurkha troops, recruited from the independent State of Nepal, have been among the most valued elements in the Indian army.

Overthrow of the Marathas.—The Gurkha war was no sooner completed than a Pindari raid of the most outrageous character was perpetrated in the peaceful British province of Madras. Hastings resolved that these raiders must be finally brought to book. But there was obviously a danger that an attack on the Pindaris would

* There is a short Life of Hastings, by Major Ross, in the Rulers of India Series.

involve trouble with the Marathas, who sheltered them. Hastings therefore organised the largest armies that had yet been put in the field by the East India Company.* His foresight was shown to be needed ; for three of the great Maratha princes seized the opportunity to attack the British power, and a fourth, Sindhia, would have done so if he had not been overawed by large forces. The Peshwa, head of the Maratha confederacy, though formally in alliance with the Company, made a treacherous attack upon the British Resident at his capital, Poona. He was defeated at *Kirki* (1817), and finally overthrown at *Ashti* (1818). Bhonsla, the raja of Nagpur, made a similar attack upon the Resident at that city, and was soundly beaten at *Sitabaldi* (1817) ; while the armies of Holkar, raja of Indore, were thoroughly defeated in the biggest battle of the war, at *Mahidpur* (1818). Meanwhile the strongholds of the Pindaris had been cleared out, and India was freed from a pest. This was the third and the most decisive of the Maratha wars. It finally disposed of the ambitions of the Marathas to be masters in India, and it was followed by a very important series of treaties, which definitely established British supremacy over the whole of India up to the line of the Indus.

Resettlement of India.—The Peshwa was dethroned and pensioned off. His lands went to make the modern Presidency of Bombay, and they were admirably organised by a great administrator, Mountstuart Elphinstone. The Peshwa retired to a palace near Cawnpore ; and there, forty years later, his adopted son, Nana Sahib, was to play a terrible part in the Indian Mutiny. The other Maratha princes were made to accept strict treaties of subsidiary alliance, and to make some cessions of territory ; and henceforth they took rank among the other dependent native princes. All the numerous Rajput princes of the wide province of Rajputana, who had long been vassals of the Marathas, and had suffered much at their hands, were bound to the Company by subsidiary treaties. This series of treaties, added to those which Wellesley had made (1818), still form the foundation of the British power over the Indian Native States.

First Burmese War.—From the Indus to Cape Comorin the East India Company was now supreme, and peace reigned over that vast and populous area, as never before in its long history. But the series of Indian wars and conquests was by no means at an end. In

* See School Atlas, Plate 54.

1823 Lord Hastings' successor, Lord Amherst, was drawn into conflict with Burma, a land quite distinct from India in character and civilisation. The Burmese had been aggressive for some forty years. They had conquered Assam, next neighbour of Bengal on the north; they had conquered the coastal region of Arakan, next to Bengal on the south. Embassies to establish friendly relations with them were received with studied insolence. They announced that they were going to conquer Bengal next, and in 1823 they attacked that province. The war thus begun lasted for three years. But in the end the king of Burma had to admit defeat, and to cede not only the provinces of Assam and Arakan, but the long coastal region of Tenasserim, which runs down the east coast of Bengal to the Malay peninsula (1826). By these acquisitions the East India Company obtained control of all the shores of the Bay of Bengal.*

The Straits Settlements.—Meanwhile the British Government (not the East India Company) had been establishing British power still farther east.† There had long been a British trading-station at *Penang*, on the Malay Straits (1786). In 1819, as a sort of compensation for the loss of Java, which had been restored to the Dutch in 1816, Sir Stamford Raffles, who had ruled Java during the British occupation, obtained the island of *Singapore* by treaty with the Sultan of Johore. Here was founded a port of call for traders on the way to the Far East which has since developed into one of the great ports of the world. In 1824 a new arrangement was made with the Dutch, whereby, in return for the abandonment of a British trading-station in Sumatra, they gave up *Malacca* in the Straits; and in 1826 the Straits Settlements were organised as a separate Presidency under the Governor-General of India.

Thus, while the oversea empires of the other European Powers had shrunk to nothing, the British power was still growing steadily in all directions, even during these years of distress and disturbance at home; and the problem of the organisation and government of the Empire was becoming every year more difficult and more important.

6. The Movement of Ideas

It is clear that, amid all the distresses of the time, there was a stir of life among the British peoples, and that powerful forces making

* See School Atlas, Plate 54.
† See School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

for change were at work. This is still more evident if we consider the intellectual life of the people.

Literature.—The years which followed Waterloo were one of the greatest ages in English literature ; indeed, if the great name of Shakespeare could be disregarded, it surpassed even the Elizabethan age in the richness and variety of its achievements. It was the age of the Romantic Revival, when men were seeing with a fresh vision the wonder and beauty of nature, and the mystery of human life, because their minds had been deeply stirred by great events and profound problems. Wordsworth and Coleridge had been at the height of their powers during the struggle with Napoleon, when Wordsworth's noble patriotic sonnets did much to inspire the best part of the nation. Coleridge had gone into retreat at Highgate in 1816, but his teachings were exercising a very deep influence on many disciples ; Wordsworth, in his simple home among the mountains, still wore his singing-robes. The great glory of the period, however, was the work of three young poets, all of whom died young, and whose best work falls entirely within the fifteen years from 1815 to 1830—the splendid and romantic Byron, first of English poets to win the ear of Europe ; the ethereal Shelley ; and, greatest poet of them all, the unhappy Keats. Many lesser poets, such as Scott, Landor, Campbell, Moore, and Rogers, combined to make England once more "a nest of singing birds." In imaginative prose the age was not less distinguished. The marvellous series of the Waverley novels had begun in 1812 and was being poured out in all its rich variety during the years of storm and stress. The exquisitely finished work of Jane Austen also belongs to the years of war and peace. And, in another kind, the genius of Charles Lamb, of Hazlitt, and of de Quincey all illuminated these cruel times.

Science and Economics.—There was also beginning in these years the great movement of scientific investigation which was to transform the character of civilisation. In 1804 Dalton had expounded the atomic theory ; Faraday and Humphry Davy were carrying on their chemical investigations ; and the first of the great geologists were disclosing the secrets of the rocks. Science had not yet become a controlling factor in the life of man, nor had it yet been taken fully into the service of industry, but the greatest of all the revolutions of the nineteenth century was beginning. Again, in the field of social study important advances were being made. Starting from the work of Adam Smith, a group of great economists, among

whom the chief was David Ricardo, were working out the principles of political economy. Others, especially under the inspiration of Jeremy Bentham, were investigating the principles of law and government, and preparing the way for the great reforms of the next era, which were to be chiefly due to the ideas and proposals of the Benthamites, or "Philosophic Radicals." A very different body of thought was also being developed by another group of writers. The theory of Socialism was worked out during the 'twenties by Robert Owen and others; and it has been asserted that all the ideas of Karl Marx were anticipated by the British Socialist writers of this period.

Education.—Organised knowledge could not play its part in the life of the nation until there were facilities for making it available. The educational machinery of England, though not of Scotland, was as yet of the most rudimentary kind. Oxford and Cambridge clave to the old ways, gave no recognition to the new knowledge, and rigidly excluded Dissenters; and there were no other centres of organised learning. In 1825 a group of liberal thinkers proposed the foundation of a university in London. In 1828 an institution called "the University of London" was opened, but it was on a modest scale, and the opposition of Oxford and Cambridge prevented it from getting a charter. Moreover, because it imposed no theological tests, it was distrusted by orthodox Anglicans, who in 1829 founded King's College as a rival institution. Such were the modest beginnings of the modern university movement. Meanwhile the provision of schools for the poor, which had begun with the Sunday school movement in 1780, had made some progress. It was wholly supported by the Churches, and there were consequently two rival sets of schools, organised by the (Church) National Society and by the (Dissenting) British and Foreign Society. But they were all poorly equipped; they had no adequate staff of teachers; and the work of teaching had to be carried on largely by the senior pupils, under what was known as the "pupil-teacher" system. Britain was very poorly equipped with the means for training her people when she entered upon the era of reconstruction. But at least she was beginning to realise her need.

CHAPTER XLI

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION IN BRITAIN (1830–1841)

1. The Reform Act of 1832

Revolution in the Air.—The general election of November, 1830, took place in an atmosphere of revolution. In July the Paris mob had, in a few days, overthrown the reactionary monarchy of Charles X, and set up a new constitutional monarchy under Louis Philippe. In August the Belgians had risen in revolt and asserted their independence of Holland. In September the revolutionary movement had spread to several of the German States, and it was about to flare out also in Poland and in Italy. These Continental agitations stimulated the excited Radicals in Britain, who had long been demanding parliamentary reform, and had now almost made up their minds that it could only be got by force. There were nightly meetings in London, and it was thought unsafe to let the new king drive through the streets. A great Political Union, with thousands of members, had been organised in Birmingham. There was an epidemic of strikes in the North, and some talk of a march on London. In the southern counties, from Kent to Wiltshire, a sort of peasants' revolt was afoot during the summer; landowners were receiving threatening letters signed by "Captain Swing," and hundreds of ricks were burnt. Britain was on the verge of revolution. All depended upon whether the unreformed Parliament could be got to reform itself.

Grey's Government.—The election gave an uncertain result, though the strength of the Whigs was greatly increased. The Duke of Wellington was defeated; but before his defeat he made a die-hard speech against parliamentary reform, in which he asserted the perfection of the existing system. Earl Grey was called upon to form a ministry—the first Whig ministry for twenty-five years. Grey himself was no Radical; but he had been a consistent advocate of parliamentary reform since 1792, and he was a brave and upright man. His Cabinet consisted, however, entirely of aristocrats, drawn from the very class whose power the Radicals hoped to see overthrown, and it included the leading followers of Canning, who had always opposed reform. No great hopes were entertained from such a

Government. But it included also some thorough-going reformers, such as Lord Durham (known as Radical Jack) and Lord John Russell. To them Grey entrusted the framing of a Reform Bill.

The Reform Bill.—When the Bill was produced (March 1831) it startled Parliament and delighted the public by its thoroughness. All pocket-boroughs were to be swept away. The 160 seats thus obtained were to be distributed among big towns and counties. There was to be a uniform franchise, and in the towns every tenant of premises worth £10 a year—4*s.* a week—was to have the right of voting. This was not a democratic franchise. But at least the old anomalies, which had given power into the hands of a small class, were to disappear. This was what captivated the country; and the whole strength of the popular agitation was diverted from revolutionary aims into enthusiastic support of "the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill."

The Fight for the Bill.—The second reading was carried by only one vote. Then Parliament was dissolved in order that the country might pass judgment on the proposals. So great was the enthusiasm that even the unreformed electoral system yielded a large majority to the Whigs. The Bill went through the Commons; but the Lords rejected it (September 1831). There was a tornado of popular indignation; vast meetings and processions; and serious riots in several towns. The Government stood firm, passed the Bill again through the Commons, and once more submitted it to the Lords (1832). They gave it a second reading by nine votes; and then proceeded to eviscerate it in committee. Lord Grey resigned. Wellington tried in vain to form a Government. The public excitement became unbounded, and there was real danger of violence. Grey returned to office, on condition that the king would undertake to create as many peers as might be necessary to carry the Bill. This settled the issue. Many peers abstained. The Bill was carried, and on June 7, 1832, received the royal assent.

Effects of Reform.—Popular opinion was right in recognising this measure, moderate as its terms were, as a real revolution, quite as important as that of 1688. It destroyed the entrenched power of the landowning oligarchy which had governed Britain since the fall of the Stewart monarchy; and it gave to a large electorate the opportunity of recasting the political and social system. The section of the nation to which controlling power now passed was in the main the middle class, together with the more prosperous artisans. The

middle class (which loves a lord) did not dream of dethroning the aristocracy. Cabinets continued to be manned by statesmen of the old class. But it was influence, not domination, which the aristocracy now enjoyed ; and to maintain their leadership they had to study and accept the opinions of the electorate.

2. The Reforms of 1832–1834

The "Liberals."—A fresh general election had to take place under the new Act. The Parliament which it chose (1832) showed an overwhelming majority for the Whig Government. But it was not a purely Whig majority. It included reformers of many schools and types, eager to get to work upon the tasks of reconstruction ; and although the direction of affairs remained in the hands of the aristocratic Whigs, who monopolised cabinet office, the real drive towards reform came from these new elements, and the character of the work that was done was largely due to them. The old name "Whig" was no longer suitable for this mixed army of reformers. The name "Liberal" came into use in its place. It was first employed about 1834, and was gradually adopted as the only name that covered all the sections of reformers. It was, in fact, a "Liberal" policy that was pursued by this Government, both at home and abroad, though the Government itself was essentially "Whig."

Palmerston and Belgium.—In foreign affairs the Government had to decide upon its attitude towards the results of the various revolutionary movements which had broken out in Europe in 1830. Lord Palmerston,* a disciple of Canning, became Foreign Secretary, and under his direction Britain adopted a definitely friendly attitude towards the Liberal movements on the Continent. Palmerston made friends with the new Government in France ; and this *entente* ranged the Liberal powers of the west against the despotic empires of Eastern Europe. The most important consequence of this alliance was that the Belgian revolt, which the reactionary Powers would have liked to suppress, won success, thanks to the protection of Britain and France ; and in 1832 the independence and neutrality of Belgium were formally recognised. This was the first definite breach in the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna. Palmerston had

* There is a brilliant Life of Palmerston by Philip Guedalla.

the reputation of being restless and meddlesome, and the diplomats of the old school regarded him as a pestilent fellow. But he identified Britain with the cause of Liberalism in Europe, and brought to an end the period of reaction.

At home, meanwhile, the work of reconstruction was very actively taken in hand. The new Parliament was to last for only two years; but few Parliaments, long or short, have done a larger amount of useful work: in many different fields the work of reconstruction was set on foot.

The Irish Question.—As in almost every other Parliament of the nineteenth century, more time was given to Ireland than to any other subject. For O'Connell, now at the head of a solid body of followers, was insistent that Irish grievances should be attended to. Yet little was done, because the House of Lords stood in the way. The Government reorganised the finances of the (Anglican) Church of Ireland, and proposed to transfer some of its surplus revenues, which were drawn from the Irish people, to education and other public objects; but the House of Lords would not permit this sacrilege. Much time was spent on an attempt to deal with the grievance of tithe, by making it a rent-charge, payable by the landlord instead of the tenant; but the proposal could not be got through; it was not passed until 1839; and in 1834 it led to a serious secession from the Government, which considerably weakened it.

Abolition of Slavery.—Meanwhile, however, a series of very important measures were successfully carried. The first, and one of the most remarkable, was the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire, £20,000,000 being voted to purchase the freedom of every slave. This noble and generous Act was the sign of a new spirit in imperial affairs, and a new attitude towards backward peoples, who had hitherto been pitilessly exploited throughout the history of European colonisation. But, as we shall see, it led to serious difficulties in more than one part of the Empire, and notably in South Africa.

The Factory Act.—Equally important in the new outlook which it expressed was the Factory Act of 1833, which was the real beginning of State intervention for the protection of the mass of working people. There had been Factory Acts in 1802 and 1819, but they were useless, because their enforcement was left to the justices of the peace. The new Act was first proposed by Michael Sadler, a Tory member, in 1831; when he failed to be elected in

1832, it was taken up by the great philanthropist, Lord Ashley, who was to be more famous as Lord Shaftesbury. But the Government took it over, and carried it by the weight of its great majority. What is more important, it inserted the provision which made the Act effective—the appointment of inspectors to go round the factories and see that it was carried out. The actual provisions of the Act were far from sweeping. It was limited to the labour of children in cotton factories ; it prohibited the employment of children under nine, and limited the hours that might be worked by older children to nine a day. This in itself was a real advance, and it also carried with it a reduction of the hours of work of adults who worked on the same machines as the children. But the important thing was the appointment of the inspectors ; for their reports, presented year by year, drew the attention of the nation to the need of reform, and thus led to the long series of Factory Acts which gradually swept away the ugliest features of the industrial system.

Law Reform.—Law reform constituted another side of this Parliament's work. It established the *Judicial Committee of the Privy Council*, which has become the central court of appeal of the whole empire ; it started the reform of the land laws ; and, if the House of Lords would have permitted, it would have set up a cheap system of local courts, like the later County Courts, to bring justice within the reach of ordinary citizens.

The India Act.—Another field of activity was represented by the India Act of 1833, which was based upon a very searching inquiry into the working of the whole system of Indian government. Now that Britain had become the paramount power in India, it was necessary that the principles of her government should be clearly defined. This Act put a stop to the trading activities of the East India Company, and thus ended the vicious combination of administration with profit-making. It swept away the rigid restrictions which had hitherto been imposed upon the entry of Western missionaries, teachers or traders into India, and thus allowed Western ideas to play freely upon the mind of India, with momentous results. And it laid down two new principles of vital importance. The first was that " the interests of the native subjects are to be preferred to those of Europeans wherever the two come in conflict." The second was that no native of India should be debarred by race, colour or religion from holding any office : in other words, the restriction upon the employment of Indians in responsible positions, which had been

imposed ever since the time of Cornwallis, was cancelled. The Indian Empire was henceforth to be governed in the interests of the Indian peoples.

Poor Law Reform.—The most difficult, controversial and unpopular measure of this Parliament was the Poor Law Reform Act of 1834. Ever since 1795, on a growing scale, the poor law authorities had been making grants in supplement of wages. This practice had pauperised large numbers of the working class; it had prevented a natural rise of wages; and it had imposed crippling burdens upon the ratepayers. The Act provided that in future no "out-door relief" should be given to any but aged and infirm persons. "Able-bodied" persons, if they needed relief, must go into a workhouse and earn it; and the conditions in the workhouses were to be less attractive than the worst-paid work, in order to discourage resort to them. These were harsh provisions, especially at a time when many thousands depended upon the rates for subsistence. In the long run the harshness might be beneficial, if it forced employers to pay a living wage and made workers more eager to be self-supporting. But there ought to have been an allowance of time to let wages adjust themselves. In any case, the system was hard on the man who was out of work through no fault of his own. For these reasons the Act was intensely unpopular throughout the working classes, and made them feel that the reformed Parliament had betrayed them. Yet harsh as it was, the Act did lead to a great improvement; and it immediately reduced the burden of rates. To administer the new system, it was provided that parishes should be grouped into Unions, under partly elected Boards of Guardians. This was the first use of popular election for local authorities. A Poor Law Commission was also set up, to supervise the Guardians. The Commission was the ancestor of the modern Ministry of Health; and it represented the first attempt on the part of the national Government to regulate the work of the local authorities, which had been left to themselves ever since the breakdown of the Tudor system of Privy Council control.

The Dissolution of 1834.—This was a wonderful record of work for two years; but it was now to be interrupted. In 1834 Lord Grey resigned. The ministry was reconstituted under Lord Melbourne. But, although it still had a large majority, the king saw fit to object to some of the ministers, called for Melbourne's resignation, and commissioned the Duke of Wellington to form a

ministry. This was the last occasion upon which a British sovereign interfered with the control of Parliament over the Government. Wellington and Peel tried to form a ministry. Knowing that they would be defeated by the existing Parliament, they asked for a dissolution, and the Parliament of the Reform Act came to a premature end.

3. The Melbourne Ministry (1834-1841)

The Tamworth Manifesto.—The election of 1834 was mainly important because Peel issued a manifesto in which he announced that he accepted the decision of 1832 and would play his part in carrying out needful reforms. In other words, Old Toryism, the mere negation of change, was dead; and to express the new character of the Tory party, the word "Conservative" came into use. Peel had, in fact, played the part of a Conservative reformer throughout the last two years; his influence had prevented his party from attempting to resist all reforms; he was by far the ablest parliamentarian on either side of the House; and for these reasons public opinion had been steadily swinging in his favour. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the unpopularity of the Poor Law Reform Act, the Liberal majority was greatly reduced, and the two parties were not unevenly balanced. This remained the normal state of things until after the next Reform Act, in 1867. Indeed, there was now no very sharp difference between the main bodies of the two parties, and men passed easily from one to the other. But the narrowness of the majority put an end to the active legislation of the previous period.

Municipal Reform.—The only important achievement of the Melbourne Ministry was the Municipal Reform Act of 1835. It was one of the most valuable of the series. Until 1835 English towns were divided into two classes, those which possessed ancient charters, and those which had grown up in modern times. The former had nearly all passed under the control of "close corporations," who represented only the interests of a small privileged class, and seldom made any attempt to carry out schemes of improvement for the borough as a whole. The latter had no organised system of government at all, save the machinery of a mediæval manor-court. Essential functions, such as street-cleaning, drainage, and lighting, were either not performed at all, or were undertaken by special bodies set up by special local Acts of Parliament. The result of this

system, or lack of system, was that the towns were mostly in a wretched condition, especially the rapidly growing industrial towns of the north and midlands. There was no attempt to ensure that houses were healthy, no adequate water-supply, no sufficient police, no proper system of drainage, no supervision of public health. The new generation of Englishmen were being bred in conditions which were often destructive of health and morals. The Municipal Reform Act set up elected municipalities in every town of a certain size, with substantial powers, including the power to raise rates. Public-spirited men found in these bodies a great chance of rendering public service. There was no part of the work of reorganisation that was carried out in Britain during the nineteenth century which produced greater results upon the well-being of the community than the work of these bodies, which was all the more important because the British people were now becoming a town-dwelling people.

Education.—One almost unnoticed change made during these years deserves notice. In 1833 Government had made small grants to the societies which were maintaining elementary schools. In 1839 the grants were increased, and a Committee of the Privy Council was set up to administer them, with a staff of inspectors. This was the beginning of national attention to education. The reports of the inspectors led to a gradual increase of Government action, and ultimately (in 1870) to the establishment of a national system of education.

Irish Affairs.—Even more than in the previous years the main attention of Parliament was perforce given to Ireland, for whose problems no sort of solution had yet been found ; with the result that the Irish were beginning to lose patience, and to clamour for the repeal of the Union, and the establishment of an Irish Parliament to deal with Irish problems. Agrarian outrages, due to poverty, rack-rents, tithes, and general misery, were frequent. They had to be met by Coercion Acts, because they could not be met by ameliorative measures. A Municipal Reform Bill, on the lines of the English one, was introduced for Ireland ; the House of Lords threw it out. The eternal discussion on Irish tithes still dragged on : the House of Lords would not accept any proposal which decreased the revenues drawn from the Irish peasantry by the Church of Ireland, and it was only on this condition that, in 1839, a Tithe Commutation Act was at last passed. But nothing had yet been done to deal with the causes of the appalling misery in which the mass of the Irish people were sunk.

Accession of Queen Victoria. — Meanwhile, in 1837, William IV had died. He was succeeded by the young Princess Victoria,* eighteen years old. In the election which followed her accession, the strength of the Liberals was still further reduced ; and the ministry's existence was so precarious that it attempted to do nothing serious. The most valuable work of Melbourne was that of teaching the young queen, who was devoted to him, the duties of a constitutional sovereign. This he did admirably : throughout her long reign of sixty-four years, Queen Victoria was the model of a constitutional monarch, and under her the conventions of the constitution were firmly established.

The Bedchamber Question.—In 1839, indeed, Melbourne's majority became so narrow that he resigned ; but Peel, when called upon to form a ministry, offended the queen by insisting that the Whig Ladies of the Bedchamber, whom she knew, should be replaced by Tory ladies. On this paltry issue, Melbourne resumed office, and held it for two more years : long enough to see the happy marriage of his beloved young mistress (1840) to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg—an upright and dutiful man who helped to give to the British court a reputation for purity and simplicity which wiped out the memory of the Regency, and won the loyalty of the middle class.

Palmerston's Foreign Policy.—During the years of Melbourne's Government (1834–1841) the chief interest lay in the sphere of foreign politics, over which Palmerston exercised an almost unchecked sway. Two questions, both of great importance for the future, excited a great deal of attention. The first was the emergence of the Eastern Question, and of a growing fear of the designs of Russia on Constantinople. The second was the outbreak of trouble with China, and the forcing open of that ancient and exclusive empire.

Mehemet Ali.—After the successful revolt of the Greeks, the Turkish Empire seemed to be on the verge of dissolution. The Sultan had not even been able to fight the Greeks alone ; he had had to call upon his powerful vassal, Mehemet Ali of Egypt, to supply him with a fleet and an army. Mehemet, who was a very vigorous despot, and had conquered the Sudan and attracted the attention of Europe, conceived the idea of enlarging his power at the expense of his suzerain. He had overrun Syria and threatened Constantinople.

* *Queen Victoria*, by Lytton Strachey, is a brilliant and penetrating biography.

Thereupon Tsar Nicholas I of Russia had offered his protection to Turkey, and for a moment the Sultan, in desperation, had submitted (Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi, 1833). Palmerston hated and feared Russia, both because the Tsar was the mainstay of reaction in Europe, and also because he was rapidly conquering Central Asia, and seemed to be threatening India : this fear of a Russian attack led to a foolish British adventure in Afghanistan, of which more will be said elsewhere. But it also led Palmerston to believe that it was necessary to strengthen Turkey as a barrier against Russia ; and this idea governed British policy for a long time to come. He therefore did everything in his power to checkmate Russia, with a large degree of success. In 1833 Nicholas had to be content to see a common guardianship of Turkey by all the Powers substituted for the protectorate which he had hoped to establish. And in 1838, when a new war broke out between Turkey and Mehemet, who once more got the better of the struggle, Palmerston again succeeded in persuading the Powers to come to the aid of Turkey, and to order Mehemet back into Egypt. This was, in its way, a great diplomatic success ; and from that date British influence was dominant at Constantinople, and all sorts of schemes for reforming Turkish government were pressed forward. But Palmerston's success had one unfortunate result. It broke the friendship between Britain and France ; for Mehemet Ali was a special protégé of France, and her disappointment at the way in which he was treated was so acute that for a time her relations with Britain were strained almost to breaking-point (1840). One incidental result of these events was that Britain annexed *Aden*, as a check to Mehemet, who had been making conquests in Arabia.

The "Opium War" in China.—The trouble in China was the direct consequence of the abolition of the East India Company's trading functions. China rigidly excluded the despised foreigner, but a limited trade was allowed under severe restrictions at Canton, where European traders bought tea, silks and porcelain in exchange for opium and other goods. The East India Company had obtained control of this trade : its agents did not mind submitting to the humiliations which the Mandarins exacted. But after the Act of 1833 a government agent took the place of the Company's agent. Representing the Crown, he could not submit to these humiliations, and he had no proper control over the private traders who now carried on the traffic. In 1796 the Chinese Government had prohibited the

importation of opium, but the Mandarins themselves had defied the prohibition. Suddenly a vigorous Mandarin was sent down, who arrested all the British traders, and demanded that the stocks of opium should be handed over for destruction. They were handed over. But smuggling by private traders continued. Negotiations were impossible, because the Mandarins would not treat on equal terms. Finally, a wretched war broke out, not on the question of admitting opium, but on the question of respectful treatment for the king's representative. In reality it was a war against the exclusive policy of the Chinese. After two years of aimless fighting, it ended (1842) with a Treaty by which China agreed to open five "treaty-ports" * to European traders, and ceded the island of *Hong-Kong* to Britain. It was a sordid business, but it began the penetration of China by Western influences. All the European Powers hastened to take advantage of the treaty.

4. The Chartist Movement: First Phase

The slow and practical process of Liberal reform was not enough for the more ardent spirits who expressed the discontents of the working class, and during all the years from 1830 to 1840 a series of agitations, which sometimes appeared to be dangerous, disturbed the nation.

Robert Owen and Socialism.—In the 'twenties the doctrine of Socialism had been developed by a series of writers and speakers, among whom the chief was Robert Owen; and it had obtained a strong hold in many districts. For a time it was diverted by the agitation for the Reform Bill. But the provisions of the Bill did not go far enough, and the popular agitation soon revived. Since political action was too slow, Robert Owen conceived the idea of a universal national strike as a certain method of bringing down the existing order. In 1834 he started an organisation known as the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, whose aim was to enrol the whole body of workers. Millions joined it; but it collapsed very quickly by its own inherent weakness. The Government made no attempt to prohibit it. But they prosecuted six Dorsetshire labourers, who had formed a lodge in the village of Tolpuddle, on a charge of sedition under an Act of 1797. The six labourers were sentenced

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

to seven years' transportation, and were actually sent to Australia. They were pardoned two years later, but this monstrous deed completed the alienation of the working class from the Whig Government. When the Poor Law Reform Act of the same year came into effect, and its harsh results were felt, the conviction grew that the people had been betrayed by the "base, bloody and brutal Whigs," and that a much more drastic change than the Reform Act of 1832 was needed.

The People's Charter.—In 1836 and 1837 this conviction took shape in a demand for the immediate introduction of complete democracy. A *People's Charter* was drafted, in the first instance, by William Lovett, of the London Working Men's Association, which had been started in 1836; and it was taken up with enthusiasm in other parts of the country, notably in Birmingham, where the Birmingham Political Union was active, and in Leeds, where a fiery writer and orator, Feargus O'Connor, published a newspaper, *The Northern Star*, which became the organ of the Chartist movement. The Charter demanded universal suffrage, annual parliaments, secret ballot, equal electoral districts, the abolition of property qualifications, and the payment of members of Parliament. This was a purely political programme, every item of which (except annual Parliaments) has since become law without bringing about the millennium. But the Chartists were not aiming merely at political democracy, which they regarded as only a means to social reconstruction. The real character of the ideal which aroused for the Charter an intense and passionate enthusiasm * was, according to one of its advocates, "the right of every man to have his home, his hearth, and his happiness. Every working man in the land has a right to a good coat, a good hat, a good dinner, no more work than will keep him in health, and as much wages as will keep him in plenty"—an excellent aim, but, as we now know, universal suffrage does not automatically realise it.

The Chartist Movement.—From the first there was a sharp division between the majority who wanted to confine themselves to constitutional action, and a vigorous "Physical Force" minority, led by Feargus O'Connor, who insisted that nothing could be done save by a rising in force. The majority had their way. All through 1838 an extraordinarily active agitation was carried on throughout

* Mrs. Gaskell's novel, *Mary Barton*, deals with these events.

the country. The Government made no attempt to prevent it. "The people have a right to meet," said Lord John Russell. "If they had no grievances, common sense would put an end to their meetings." The result was that the discussion took place openly and above ground, instead of in secret conspiracies. Apart from some rioting at Birmingham in 1839, there was no disturbance of order. Troops were drafted to the danger-spots, but they were carefully kept in reserve. At length, in July 1839, a monster petition was presented to Parliament. It was discussed, and rejected.

Collapse of the Movement.—What were the Chartists to do now? There was an attempt to call a general strike, but it had no success. At Newport, in South Wales, some 3,000 armed Chartists attempted to release one of their leading orators who had been imprisoned, but they were easily dispersed, and, for a time, the agitation died down. It might have become very formidable if the methods of Sidmouth had been employed.

5. Industrial Development of the 'Thirties

The worst of the distresses from which Chartism sprang were to be alleviated, in part, by the working of the new laws we have described, but these could only operate gradually. Meanwhile, the development of the Industrial Revolution, which was going on more rapidly than ever, was bringing about an increase of wealth, which would make better conditions possible; although, in the meantime, it was inflicting real sufferings upon certain sections of the community.

The Textile Trades.—In the textile trades, in which the Industrial Revolution began, the main feature of the period—apart from the perpetual improvement of spinning machinery, and the general adoption of steam instead of water power to drive it—was the conquest of the weaving branch of the industry by machinery. Owing to the necessity of a great variety of patterns, the power-loom had at first been applied only to the simpler stuffs, and the hand-loom weavers still held their own in all other branches. A series of inventions enabled the power-loom, during this period, to be used for the most complicated patterns. The result was that the hand-loom weavers were crushed out of existence. They put up a long struggle, and suffered acutely; but in the end they had to yield, and become, like the spinners, operatives in great factories. There was loss in

this process, but there were also gains. Not only were prices reduced and output expanded, but the workers themselves, if they lost independence, gained in improved conditions of work, especially when the Factory Acts were extended; moreover, it was now easier for them to combine, and their Trade Unions, now legal, were able by negotiation with the employers to obtain better conditions.

The Metal Trades.—In the metal trades the new methods of large-scale production were becoming increasingly dominant. In particular, the engineering trade, which made all the machines, was growing with extraordinary rapidity, especially since the withdrawal of the prohibition to export machines in 1825. Engineering was rapidly becoming the key-industry of the modern world. And because of its demands, the iron and steel industry was also growing rapidly; and coal-mining, upon which all the rest depended, was increasing the number of its employees very quickly.

Improving Conditions.—In all these trades the supremacy of Britain over the rest of the world was still overwhelming. It was only in the 'forties that the Industrial Revolution began to take root in other countries—first in Belgium, then in France and Germany. Consequently the volume of available employment was growing very swiftly. It was beginning to outpace the growth of population, though that was very swift, rising from 10,000,000 (for England and Wales) in 1811 to 18,000,000 in 1851. And as employment increased, the level of wages rose. It was rising steadily (apart from occasional set-backs) all through these years, in spite of the weakness of the Trade Unions, which still included only a small fraction of the working population.

The Railways.—But the great revolution of these years, and the chief cause of improving conditions, was the application of machinery to transport—the coming of the steamboat and the railway. The steamboat began first (in 1812), but developed the more slowly, because of the difficulty of carrying enough coal; yet by 1840 the first "liners" were plying across the Atlantic. But the development of the railways was extraordinarily swift. In 1825 a railway between Stockton and Darlington was opened, and in 1830 one between Liverpool and Manchester. During the next few years progress went on at a furious rate: engines were rapidly improved, and lines were laid in every part of the country. By 1837 the main features of the railway system were already blocked out; by 1851 6,500 miles of railway track had been laid, and the

railway had already become the principal means of communication. The vast labours of construction, which employed about 200,000 men, greatly diminished unemployment; the manufacture of rails, engines, and a thousand other necessities, employed many thousands more; and the wages of all these workers, spent on food and clothing, stimulated all the other industries. It was the great effort of railway construction which lifted Britain out of the bog of unemployment. And its results were a great increase of the nation's wealth, and an immense reduction in the cost of transport, and therefore of all commodities.

These were the main causes of the marked contrast between the miseries of 1821 or 1831, and the self-complacent prosperity of 1851, when the Great Exhibition was opened, and when all the turmoils of the previous period had died away.

CHAPTER XLII

RECONSTRUCTION IN THE EMPIRE

1. New Ideas on Imperial Policy

If the British people were recasting their institutions, and making a fresh start, at home, this is even more true of the British Empire, in which the changes that took place during the years from 1830 to 1840 were so great that they may fairly be described as a revolution in the character and organisation of the Empire.

The Radical Imperialists.—These changes were mainly due to the ideas that were now dominant in the mother-country. But they were especially influenced by two groups of men. In the wide lands under British control which were suited for white settlement, the new policy was mainly due to a group of colonial reformers, who may be called the Radical Imperialists, and who were able to influence the policy of government. The chief inspirer of this group was Edward Gibbon Wakefield, with whom were closely associated Lord Durham (the "Radical Jack" of the Reform Bill), Sir William Molesworth, who later became a Liberal Cabinet minister, and a number of others: they founded a Colonisation Society in 1830, and were extremely active in the 'thirties and 'forties. Their main ideas

were two. In the first place, they strongly believed in colonial self-government, which most Conservatives were inclined to resist as tending towards the disruption of the Empire. In the second place, they advocated "systematic colonisation," as a means both of peopling empty lands and of relieving distress at home; and they worked out a scheme for forwarding it by using the money derived from the sale of colonial lands to defray the cost of assisted emigration by carefully selected emigrants. The peopling of Australia and New Zealand, and the growth of self-governing institutions in the "white" colonies were largely due to their influence.

The Missionaries.—The second influential group consisted of the friends of missionary and philanthropic work. They had a dominant influence at the Colonial Office, where both the Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, and the Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir James Stephen, were convinced adherents of this school. Their chief concern was for the protection of backward peoples. For that reason they were opposed to the extension of self-government in those countries where the backward peoples were very numerous, because this would involve the ascendancy of their white masters. They were mainly responsible for the adoption of the view that it should be the primary duty of the Home Government to protect the native races. Their influence was to be seen in the emancipation of the slaves, in the India Act of 1833, and in the policy adopted by the British Government in South Africa.

Between them, these two bodies of opinion exercised a profound influence upon imperial policy, and transformed in a very short time the character of the British Empire.

2. Canada: the Durham Report

Friction in Canada.—The most remarkable development of this period was in Canada, the senior group of British colonies, and the most populous.* The system established by Pitt's Canada Act of 1791 was not working well. There was sharp friction between the French and the English settlers in Quebec, and racial feeling had reached a high pitch of bitterness. But there was also dangerous friction in all the colonies, British as well as French, between the Governors with their nominated Councils who controlled the executive

* School Atlas, Plate 51.

Government, and the representative assemblies which controlled legislation and taxation. This state of friction was gravely impeding the development of Canada. As in the American colonies before the American Revolution, it was making efficient government very difficult: the assemblies were refusing the money needed by the administration, because they had no control over it; and a second colonial revolt seemed probable.

The Rebellion of 1837.—Indeed, it actually broke out in 1837. There was a revolt of the French Canadians, under Louis Papineau; another revolt of the discontented English settlers in Ontario, who at one moment brought in help from the United States; and though there was no actual rising, the position was almost equally strained in the maritime colonies, especially Nova Scotia. The old British colonial system, of a nominated executive and an elected assembly, was in fact breaking down.

The Durham Report.—The revolts were crushed without difficulty, but the situation was so serious that the Melbourne government decided to send out Lord Durham to report on it (1838). Durham took out with him his friends of the Colonisation Society, Wakefield and Charles Buller. Durham acted high-handedly in banishing the leaders of the late revolt to the Bermuda Islands, and for this he was recalled in disgrace. But after his recall he presented a Report on Canada (1839) which was in itself an act of the highest statesmanship. It placed the problems of colonial government in a new light, and laid down the principles which were henceforward to govern British colonial policy in all the "white men's" colonies. It made a very searching examination of the situation in Canada, and urged that the only solution lay in making the colonists, French and English alike, feel that they were responsible for the destiny of their country by giving them full responsibility for its government. Durham was bitterly criticised at the time on the ground that his policy involved colonial independence and the dismemberment of the Empire. But he was an enthusiastic believer in the Empire; he believed that it was only in freedom that it could hold together; and subsequent history has shown that he was right.

The Canada Act.—The result of Durham's report was the Canada Act, passed by the Melbourne government in its last year of precarious office (1840), which united Upper and Lower Canada in a single colony, and endowed it with a two-chamber legislature. But the decisive step of making the executive responsible to the

legislature was not yet taken. The Duke of Wellington, whose party came into power in the next year, declared that "local responsible government and the sovereignty of Great Britain are completely incompatible"; and it was not until another Liberal Government returned to power in 1846 that full responsible government was established. Nevertheless, the principle had been definitely laid down in Durham's great Report, which is one of the classics of colonial government.

3. Australia and New Zealand: Systematic Colonisation

Systematic Colonisation.—In two ways the decade 1830–1840 marked a fresh start in the development of Australia. In the first place a great part of the interior was revealed by the journeys of a number of intrepid explorers.* In the second place systematic colonisation began on a large scale, largely on the Wakefield system. The number of free immigrants, which had been usually less than 1,000 a year in the 'twenties, rose to 14,000 in 1838 and 32,000 in 1841. This could not have happened—in view of the length and cost of the journey—unless there had been a scheme of assisted emigration. In 1831 the Colonial Office adopted Wakefield's plan, and ordered that land should be sold instead of being given away, and that the money should be used to bring out emigrants and settle them. Under this system *Victoria*, to which convicts were never admitted, received a large inrush of immigrants: it was organised as a separate colony in 1835. *South Australia*, which also received no convicts, was started as a colony in 1836, on Wakefield's plan; and although it was badly managed at first, a great administrator, Sir George Grey,† who was sent out in 1841, soon pulled it round.

Transportation Abolished.—The contrast between the growing prosperity of these new free colonies and the relative stagnation of the older convict settlements of New South Wales and Tasmania made it clear that the presence of the convicts was an obstacle to progress. Accordingly, in 1837, a parliamentary committee under Sir William Molesworth (another of the colonial reformers) recommended that transportation should be abolished.

* For the exploration of Australia, see School Atlas, Plate 55*b*.

† Sir George Grey played a very important part not only in Australia but in New Zealand and South Africa. There is a good Life of him by G. C. Henderson.

It was abolished in New South Wales in 1840, with the result of an immediate increase of the better type of immigrants. Thus Australia, after a very unpromising beginning, had made a fair start on the way to prosperity.

New Zealand.—Meanwhile, a beginning had been made with the colonisation of New Zealand.* Since Captain Cook's discovery of the islands in 1769, they had been left to themselves. But a drift of traders, escaped convicts and runaway sailors had found their way to the North Island, where they lived among the Maoris. Then, from 1814 onwards, the ever-active missionaries had planted stations in New Zealand, and had won great influence among the Maoris. Their view was that the Maoris should be left to themselves, under missionary influence. But it was unreasonable that these fertile and beautiful lands should be left almost empty, for there were only about 100,000 Maoris.

First Settlement and Annexation.—Wakefield had fixed his eye upon New Zealand, as an eminently favourable field for colonisation. In 1839 he started a New Zealand Company, to carry out his plans ; and the first party of 1,300 settlers, carefully selected, were promptly sent out. But they got themselves into difficulties with the missionaries and the Maoris. In order to ensure that justice was done, Captain Hobson was sent out in 1840 by the British Government to annex the islands and to act as lieutenant-governor. He promptly concluded a treaty with the Maori chiefs, whereby, in return for the recognition of British sovereignty, they were guaranteed full possession of their lands. Thus began the history of the youngest of the British dominions. Here the two influences in colonial policy—the systematic colonisers and the missionaries—met, and to some extent clashed ; and from this troubles were to arise in the next period.

4. South Africa : the Great Trek

Boers and Britons.—In the history of South Africa the decade 1830–1840 was a period of momentous importance ; it saw the beginning of that unhappy clash between Boer and Briton which was to embitter its history for three-quarters of a century. The main cause was a difference of view as to how the natives should be treated.

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*c*.

The Boers had always employed the natives as slaves, and still held the same ideas on that head which every Englishman had held in the seventeenth century. The English came to this new land full of the new ideas of humanitarianism, bringing with them missionaries whose work lay among the natives, and who took up the cause of their flocks with a sometimes excessive zeal.

The Kaffir Wars.—Not only had the Boers always employed natives as slaves, but those of them who had gone farthest afield lived in dread of the warlike and aggressive Kaffirs, the advance-guard of the formidable Bantu race, who had long been pressing southwards from Central Africa. There had already been four Kaffir wars before the British occupation of South Africa,* and there were two dangerous Kaffir raids in 1812 and 1819. The Boers, therefore, were in no mood for sentimentalism about the natives. On the other hand, the missionaries sent home exaggerated pictures of the way in which the natives were treated by the Boers.

Growing Friction.—Trouble on this question had begun as early as 1815, when a farmer at Schlachter's Nek refused to attend a court on a summons obtained by a Hottentot, and there was a little rising in his support. But two events of 1834 strained the relations between the Boers and the British Government to the breaking-point. The first was the emancipation of the slaves, and the fact that the compensation paid in South Africa was less than half of the estimated value of the slaves. The second was a very serious Kaffir raid, which inflicted a vast amount of damage. The able governor, D'Urban, beat back the raiders, and annexed part of their territory (1835); but he was overridden and recalled by the Colonial Secretary, who attributed the invasion to the "systematic injustice" from which he believed that the Kaffirs suffered. This ended the patience of the Boers; and the more enterprising among them resolved to go into the wilderness rather than remain subject to a Government so unsympathetic.

The Great Trek.—The "Great Trek," which began in 1836, and affected perhaps 16,000 of the Boer farmers, was one of the most romantic events in modern history. Crossing the Orange River in their tented wagons, the trekkers moved into the north of what is now the Orange Free State. There they routed the terrible host of the Matabili king, Mosilikatze (1837), and started a little

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*b*.

republic of their own. Some of them pressed on into the Transvaal, which they occupied. In 1838 a party of them came down through the Drakensberg mountains into the empty land of Natal, which had been devastated by the fierce warrior tribe of the Zulus. Here, at *Weenen*, some of them were massacred; whereupon they attacked the formidable Zulu empire, broke its army at *Blood River* (1838),

FIG. 37.—South Africa and the Great Trek.

and enthroned a new Zulu king. In three years these farmers had carved out for themselves an empire.

A Difficult Problem.—This was the first result of the emancipation of the slaves, and of the adoption of the policy of protecting the rights of native races. The British Government watched these events with perplexity. Could the Boers safely be left to stir up the natives in this dangerous way, and to "oppress" them? On the other hand, was it wise or just to force them back under an authority which they repudiated? These were questions for the future.

In its first stages, the new colonial policy was thus raising difficulties as well as solving them. But whether in Canada,

Australia, New Zealand or South Africa, it is clear that the years which followed the Reform Act in Britain were a period of new beginnings.

5. Reorganisation in India

An Era of Peace and Reform.—From the end of the First Burmese War in 1826 to the outbreak of the First Afghan War in 1841 there was an interval of unbroken peace in India and on its borders—probably the longest period of unbroken peace that India had ever enjoyed. The India Act of 1833 (p. 543) came in the middle of it. The first Governor-General under the Act * was Lord William Cavendish-Bentinck, who had already held office since 1828. His reign is pre-eminently known as a period of reform, and much of this reform was due to the requirements of the Act.

The Indian Code.—Hitherto the three Presidencies of Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras had, under the general supervision of the Governor-General, maintained their own systems of law. The Act laid it down that a single uniform code of law for all British India should be drawn up, "due regard being had to the peculiar usages of the people"; and a Legal Member of the Governor-General's council was appointed for this purpose. The first Legal Member was Macaulay,† the historian, and to him fell the immense work of supervising the preparation of the code.

Macaulay's Minute.—Macaulay also played the leading part in another change of even greater importance. Since 1813 the Government had devoted funds to the encouragement of education; but these had been mainly given to the Oriental schools of learning, whose teaching was conducted in the ancient classical tongues, Sanskrit and Arabic. More recently, however, several schools of Western learning had been opened, by the missionaries and others, and many held that the Government funds should be devoted to them. A long controversy had raged on the subject. Macaulay, as Chairman of the Committee on Education, drew up a famous Minute, which fixed the future policy of government, and in which he urged that the great need of India was the extension of Western knowledge,

* He was indeed the first Governor-General of India; for until the title was altered by this Act, it had been "Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal." There is a short Life of Bentinck in the Rulers of India Series.

† Sir George Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay* is one of the best biographies in the language.

and that teaching should be given in English rather than in Sanskrit and Arabic : teaching in the spoken languages being impossible, partly because there were 147 of them, partly because they were not sufficiently developed to express the ideas of Western science.

Western Education.—The development of Western education was further encouraged by the freedom of entry to India which the Act gave to Europeans : they had hitherto been kept out lest they should disturb or exploit the Indians. Now many missionaries came in. They devoted themselves largely to teaching, founding schools and colleges ; and their work was supplemented by the establishment of a number of Government schools and colleges. All this involved a change of momentous importance. Hitherto the British power had been content to give peace and order to India, and had scrupulously avoided any attempt to modify her ancient ways of life. Now the influence of Western ideas was being introduced and fostered. This has done more than anything else to determine the modern development of India, whose educated classes have been trained in English and impregnated with Western ideas.

Social Reforms.—Bentinck also attacked certain Indian usages, repugnant to Western ideas, with which previous governors had never dared to meddle for fear of outraging Indian susceptibilities. The most important of these was the practice of *Sati* or *Suttee*—the burning of widows on the funeral pyres of their husbands. *Sati* was made illegal. A systematic campaign was also organised against the *Thugs*, who practised organised murder and robbery on the pretext of making sacrifice to the Goddess of Destruction. Again, Bentinck took over the government of two Indian States, Coorg and Mysore, on the ground that they were being misgoverned, a step for which there was no precedent ; and the supervision over native States was made much closer. The British Government was assuming responsibility for the maintenance not only of peace but of good government throughout India.

In short, in India, as in the colonies, a new outlook and new conceptions of government came into being in these years. They were a direct result of the change that was taking place in Britain.

At the end of the period (1839) the government of India was involved in an unfortunate adventure in Afghanistan. But as this did not mature until later, and as it was the beginning of a new period of conquest, it had best be left until a later chapter (p. 575).

CHAPTER XLIII

THE SECOND STAGE OF RECONSTRUCTION (1841–1852)

1. Sir Robert Peel and Free Trade (1841–1846)

Sir Robert Peel.—In 1841 Sir Robert Peel * came to power with a solid Conservative majority. Peel was in some respects the most typical statesman of the early nineteenth century, for his career reflected the change that was passing over the country. The son of a Lancashire cotton manufacturer, he had been educated at Harrow and Oxford. He thus linked, in his own person, the old tradition with the new. All his manhood had been spent in politics, and most of it in office. In many spheres he had shown himself a man of great practical capacity, and he had no rival as a parliamentarian. He was not a theorist, and he never looked far ahead ; but he was honest, upright, loyal to facts, and not ashamed to change his mind. His action on Catholic Emancipation, which had shattered the old Tory party, had shown both his weakness and his strength—he had failed to foresee the inevitable, but he had frankly accepted it when it came. In the same way, he had opposed parliamentary reform as long as possible ; but when it was carried he had seen that it must be followed by other changes. He was never in advance of public opinion ; but he could learn from events. He had educated his party out of Toryism and into Conservatism, and made it take a share in the work of reform. Soon he was to shatter it once more, as a result of the last and greatest of his conversions : he came into office as an avowed Protectionist, and he established Free Trade.

Peel as Prime Minister.—Peel's practical capacity was shown in the skill with which he managed his Cabinet. It has been said that under him the cabinet system reached its perfection. His Cabinet was a team, whose captain was fully in touch with the work of every department, whereas most Prime Ministers have been predominantly interested in one aspect of public affairs. He was a great administrator rather than a great reformer. Most of his

* There is a short Life of Peel by J. R. Thursfield (Twelve English Statesmen), and an essay by Sir Richard Lodge in Hearnshaw's *Prime Ministers of the Nineteenth Century*.

measures dealt with practical and immediate issues raised by public agitations which forced the Government to take action. He came to power at a moment when great agitations were afoot, and they determined the lines of his policy.

O'Connell and Repeal. — In Ireland trouble was clearly brewing. The younger generation, tired of O'Connell's strictly constitutional policy, which had produced so little result, were preparing for more drastic action. They called themselves Young Ireland, and were in touch with the revolutionary movements on the Continent which were to bring about an epidemic of revolution in 1848. O'Connell, eager to regain his leadership, had started a vigorous agitation for the repeal of the Union. In 1840 he had founded a Repeal Association, and was raising from the peasantry a "repeal rent" like the earlier "Catholic rent" (p. 531). He was addressing great meetings, and promised that 1843 should be the "year of repeal." When 1843 came, a gigantic meeting was to be held at Clontarf. Peel prohibited the meeting, and sent troops to prevent it. Always eager to avoid violence, O'Connell declared the meeting cancelled. In spite of this, he was tried and sentenced for sedition. The House of Lords quashed the sentence. But this failure killed O'Connell's influence. "Young Ireland" resolved henceforward to abandon the constitutional methods to which O'Connell had clung.

Irish Reforms.—Peel's Irish policy was not, however, merely one of repression. He appointed a Commission (the Devon Commission) to inquire into the causes of Irish unrest. Its report for the first time pointed to the evils of the land system as the principal cause; but when Peel made a very modest attempt to carry out some of its recommendations, his proposals were rejected by the House of Lords. He tried to placate the Catholic priests by making a grant to the Catholic seminary of Maynooth. And, as the only Irish University was confined to Anglicans, he found public money to start modest colleges at Belfast, Cork and Galway. These were the first exchequer grants for university education. But they did little good in Ireland, because few Irish Catholics were willing to go to what were called "godless colleges." In any case these measures did nothing to remedy the worst evils of Ireland—the rack-renting of the land, and the grinding penury of the peasantry. These were cruelly shown when, in 1845 and 1846, the potato crop failed. A terrible famine followed. Thousands died of starvation. The

result of the famine, and of the wholesale emigration which was its sequel, was that the population of Ireland fell from 8,300,000 in 1845 to 6,600,000 in 1851. This was a grim comment on the failure to find any remedy for the economic distress of Ireland.

The Chartists Again.—Meanwhile, in England the agitation for the People's Charter had recommenced. After the failure of 1839 (p. 551) a National Charter Association had been founded. The old enthusiasm was reawakened, and in 1842 a second petition, with over 3,000,000 signatures, was presented to Parliament. Again it was rejected. Thereupon a general strike was called, and there was some talk of rebellion. But there was little response to the strike call, and no rebellion. Unlike the Melbourne government in 1839, Peel took strong measures of repression : some 1,500 arrests were made, 500 men were sent to prison, and 79 were transported. These sentences were probably unnecessary.

Cobden and the Anti-Corn Law League.—Far more important and far more successful than the Chartist movement was an agitation for the repeal of the Corn Laws, which had been started at Manchester in 1839. The Anti-Corn Law League was supported by large funds, subscribed mainly by the manufacturers of Lancashire and Yorkshire ; and it carried on, for eight years, by meetings and pamphlets, the most systematic campaign that had yet been seen in Britain or any other country. Its leaders were two very remarkable men : Richard Cobden, a Manchester cotton printer, who has never been surpassed in the power of cogent argument ; and John Bright, a Rochdale manufacturer, who was to prove himself the noblest English orator of the century. Although their attack was primarily directed against the Corn Laws, they denounced all protective duties, and demanded the establishment of complete freedom of trade as the surest means of curing economic ills. They argued that if taxes on imports were withdrawn, not only would the cost of living be reduced, but the manufacturers would be able to produce their goods more cheaply, since they would get all their requirements at the lowest price. They argued that, since all imports must be paid for by exports, the exclusion of imports must be bad for export trade. If foreign corn were allowed to come in free of duty, British manufactures would have to be sent out to pay for it ; and thus the cost of living of the worker would be reduced, and the amount of work available for him would be increased, at the same time.

Peel's Budgets.—The Free Trade agitation produced so great

an effect that it alarmed the landowning class. They looked to Peel to protect their interests. Peel was indeed pledged to maintain the Corn Laws. But he saw that they were working badly. Various modifications had been tried, notably a sliding-scale of duties, introduced in 1828; but they had all had unexpected and unfortunate results. Peel tried a reduced scale of duties, but this satisfied neither the landlords nor the Free Traders. On the general free-trade case, however, Peel was gradually converted by the Manchester apostles. In the Budget of 1842, although he was faced by a deficit, he boldly abolished the duties on about four hundred articles, and greatly reduced them on as many more, imposing an income tax to make up the deficiency. Three years' experience showed that the lower duties actually gave a better yield, because lower prices led to bigger sales. In the Budget of 1845, therefore, he made still larger reductions.

Disraeli and "Young England."—Peel's progress towards free trade aroused many misgivings among his followers. There was a group of romantic young Tories who called themselves "Young England," and drew their inspiration from a brilliant Jew, Benjamin Disraeli. They were alive to the miseries of industrial England, which their leader vividly portrayed in his novel *Sybil*; they believed that these miseries were due to the hard materialism of the manufacturers, whom they despised; and they dreamed of restoring the leadership of the aristocracy by taking up the cause of the suffering factory workers, and stimulating the nationalist spirit of England. To them the doctrine of free trade seemed to be conceived solely in the interests of the manufacturers. They thought it a bagman's creed. They feared that Peel was about to betray them by going over to the manufacturers.

Repeal of the Corn Laws.—Soon their fears were justified. The failure of the Irish potato crop in 1845 completed Peel's conversion. It seemed monstrous to tax foreign corn when thousands were on the verge of starvation. Peel told his Cabinet that the Corn Laws would have to go, and that if they went they would never be restored. This broke up the Cabinet, and split the Conservative party. Peel resigned. But as Lord John Russell could not form a government, he had to resume office (January 1846) with a reconstituted Cabinet. He carried the repeal of the Corn Laws with Liberal support, against the angry denunciations of his followers, led by Lord George Bentinck and Benjamin Disraeli.

Fall of Peel.—A month later he was turned out of office by

the votes of his angry followers, and the Conservative party, so recently reconstituted, was shattered once more. The establishment of Free Trade completed the series of great changes which had been made since 1830. It led to a very rapid increase of British trade, and to a decrease of unemployment and distress; because British manufacturing supremacy was so overwhelming that the removal of trade barriers was bound to increase it. Hence the adoption of the new fiscal system, combined with the social reforms already carried out, brought to an end the thirty years of acute distress and readiness for revolution which had followed Waterloo.

Bank Act and Railways Act.—This was, beyond question, the most important achievement of Peel's ministry. But it did not stand alone. In 1844 Peel had carried a *Bank Act*, which defined the principles of British banking, and by so doing contributed to the country's prosperity. In the same year a *Railways Act* defined the relations of the State to the great railway monopolies. The responsibility for this Act fell to Peel's favourite disciple, William Ewart Gladstone,* a young man of immense earnestness and ability, who had been engrossed in religious questions until Peel, guessing at his capacity to handle economic problems, sent him to the Board of Trade. Gladstone was anxious to bring the railways under direct State control. Peel was not willing to go so far; but the Act which he accepted imposed upon the railways a very high degree of State regulation, and assumed for the State the power of fixing their rates and fares.

Mines and Factories.—Meanwhile, the great philanthropist, Lord Ashley (Shaftesbury), had stimulated still further interferences with the business-man's control over his own business. In 1840 Ashley had obtained the appointment of a commission of inquiry into the conditions of work in the mines. Their report, published in 1842, revealed a hideous condition of things, which awakened the public conscience. Women and children were working underground, like beasts of burden, for thirteen or fourteen hours a day, often half naked. The *Mines Act* of 1842 forbade the employment underground of women or of boys under ten years old. In 1844 a new Factory Act, introduced by the Government, forbade the employment of children under nine in factories, limited the hours of

* There is an abridgment, by C. F. G. Masterman, of Morley's great Life of Gladstone; and there is an essay on Gladstone by Ramsay Muir in Hearnshaw's *Prime Ministers of the 19th Century*.

older children, and required employers to take precautions against accidents. This did not satisfy Ashley and the reformers. Supported by the Young England Tories and by many Liberals, he almost defeated the Government, though it was backed by Liberals of the Manchester school. On the question of State interference with the conditions of labour, both of the great political parties were deeply divided. But experience showed that the enforcement of decent conditions was not bad for trade, and did not lead to a reduction of wages, as critics had feared ; it rather led to greater efficiency.

American Boundary Question.—In external affairs two questions of importance arose during Peel's tenure of power. One was the beginning of a new period of war and conquest in India, which will be discussed later (p. 575). The other was the settlement of two longstanding boundary disputes with the United States. The boundary of *Maine* had been disputed ever since 1783. In 1831 the United States had agreed to submit the question to arbitration, but had refused to accept the award. In 1842 this vexed question was settled by the Ashburton Treaty,* though Canada was anything but satisfied with the decision. Again, there had long been a dispute as to the boundary between Canada and the United States in the far west. In 1818 it had been agreed that the boundary should follow the forty-ninth parallel of latitude from the great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains. Beyond the Rocky Mountains, in the region which now includes British Columbia and the States of Washington and Oregon, there were both British and American settlers. The United States claimed the whole Pacific coast ; the British Government claimed that the River Columbia should be the boundary. Feeling ran high on this subject, and in 1840 the Americans were threatening war unless their claims were conceded in full. A rational settlement was reached in the Oregon Treaty of 1846, which took the forty-ninth parallel as the boundary as far as the Pacific Ocean. † Thus was fixed a boundary line 3,000 miles long—the only frontier in the world which is not guarded on either side by troops or by forts. Much of the credit for these peaceful adjustments belonged to Peel's cool and moderate Foreign Secretary, Lord Aberdeen, who prided himself upon avoiding the irritating and dictatorial methods of his predecessor Palmerston.

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 69*e*.
† See School Atlas, Plate 51.

2. The Russell Government (1846–1852)

Russell's Government.—Peel's Government was succeeded by a Liberal Government under Lord John Russell, which lasted for six years. But the Liberals had not a majority. They depended upon the support of Peel's followers, between whom and the protectionist section of the Conservative party there was now a bitter cleavage. For that reason Russell was not able to undertake much controversial legislation ; and the chief interest of his Government lay in the realms of colonial and foreign policy. In domestic affairs its main achievements were the repeal of the Navigation Acts (1849), which was a logical consequence of the adoption of free trade ; a further extension of the Factory and Mines Acts, notably by the adoption of a Ten-hours' Act for textile factories in 1847 ; and the beginning of systematic attention to Public Health under the terms of the Public Health Act (1848).

Famine and Evictions in Ireland.—Ireland, however, continued to be a great source of difficulty. The worst phase of the potato famine came in 1846, after Peel's resignation. Relief funds were raised, and other measures were taken, to save the population from starvation ; but the suffering was intense, many thousands died, and many thousands more passed out of the country to crowd the poorer quarters of English cities, or to seek new homes in America. They carried with them an unquenchable bitterness against Britain. When the famine was over, new horrors followed. The wretched cottiers were unable to pay their rents. They were evicted by thousands from their tiny holdings, which in many cases they had cleared and fenced by their own toil. These evictions brought about an ugly war between landlords and tenants. Agrarian outrages were incessant. The Government had to pass a Coercion Act for the maintenance of order ; but when they tried to obtain powers to control evictions and to secure compensation to the outgoing tenant for the improvements he had made, their proposals were thrown out. Nothing was done to tackle the evils from which all these troubles flowed.

The Rebellion of 1848.—The consequence was that the Young Ireland party turned to violence. They cannot be blamed : no country has ever passed through worse miseries than those of Ireland from 1845 to 1848. In 1848 the revolutionary spirit was abroad in Europe. Monarchies and powers were toppling in all

directions ; and the Young Ireland leaders hoped to get help from the revolutionary leaders in France. They got none. But they organised a hopeless little rebellion with their own resources. It was crushed without difficulty ; its leaders were captured and transported. Thus, while the worst distresses of Britain were being gradually healed, no remedy had yet been found, or even seriously sought, for the yet deeper distresses of Ireland, which were the outcome of three centuries of mistaken policy.

End of the Chartist Movement.—The revolutionary spirit which was abroad in 1848 also stimulated a last attempt to reinvigorate the Chartist movement. Once more a huge petition was prepared, and arrangements were made for a monster meeting to accompany it in procession to Westminster. Government did not interfere with the meeting ; but it refused to allow the procession, and enrolled an army of special constables to guard against possible disorder. But no disorder occurred. The swollen petition was taken in three cabs to Westminster. The signatures were said to number 6,000,000. But it was discovered that a large proportion of them were frauds, and the ridicule aroused by this discovery snuffed out the guttering flame of Chartism. To the credit of the Government there were no prosecutions or imprisonments. Chartism was dead, and needed no persecution : it had been killed by reviving trade and by social reforms.

Revolution in Europe.—The contrast between these ineffectual movements in Britain and Ireland and the tremendous upheavals which disturbed almost every part of Europe between 1848 and 1850 seemed to be a tribute to the work of reconstruction which had been carried out during the last eighteen years, and made Europe envious of the solidly founded liberty of Britain. The British people looked on with a sort of self-complacent sympathy at the revolutionary movements in France, Germany, Italy, and the Austrian Empire. Palmerston, once more in control at the Foreign Office, made himself detested by the governments of Europe by his restless attempts to help the Continental Liberals—especially when the tide turned against them in 1850 ; but he made himself very popular in Britain, and his popularity was the chief asset of an otherwise weak Government.

Grey's Colonial Policy.—The most important work of the Russell Government lay in the realm of colonial policy. Here alone it made an important contribution to the work of reconstruction ; it is not too much to say that Earl Grey, the Colonial Secretary of this

Government, fixed the lines of British colonial policy. All the Dominions look back to his period of office as marking an important epoch in their development. Grey was apt to be stiff, dogmatic and unsympathetic, and he earned unpopularity by trying to force convicts upon some of the colonies. But he had clear ideas about colonial policy, and he carried them out.

Responsible Government in Canada.—One of his first acts was to instruct the governors of the Canadian colonies that their ministries must in future be drawn, as in Britain, from the party that had a majority in the legislature. This implied the full establishment of responsible government. The new system was put to a severe test in 1849, when the Canadian Government proposed to pay compensation to the rebels of 1837. The "Loyalists" were furious, and demanded that the Governor should veto the Bill. The Governor was Lord Elgin, a son-in-law of Lord Durham. In spite of riots he refused to interfere, on the ground that the Government must accept the responsibility for its own acts. This decision made responsible government in Canada a reality.

Self-government in Australia.—In Australia Lord Grey strove to bring about a federation of the group of colonies; but they were not yet ready for this step. In 1850, however, a remarkable step was taken. The four colonies of New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria were endowed with single-chamber legislatures, and they were empowered to draft their own constitutions, subject to the approval of the Privy Council. The constitutions drawn up under this Act were in all cases modelled on that of Britain, and they were confirmed by a British Act of 1855. Thus democratic and responsible self-government was established in Australia as well as in Canada.

Progress of New Zealand.—The infant settlements of New Zealand had made great progress since the annexation of the islands in 1840. There were now six distinct settlements, three in the North Island and three in the South Island.* They had been nurtured by Wakefield's New Zealand Company, which had organised admirably selected bands of emigrants. One of these (sent to Otago) consisted of Scottish settlers chosen by the Free Church of Scotland; another (sent to Canterbury) consisted of English settlers chosen by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*c*.

Under the wise guidance of Sir George Grey, who went out as Governor in 1845, difficulties with the Maoris about land had been overcome. By 1852, only twelve years after the first settlement, 30,000 settlers had been planted in New Zealand. The time had come for the New Zealand Company to wind up its work; and Lord Grey devised a federal democratic constitution for the six settlements, reserving to the Crown the control of relations with the Maoris, so as to protect them against unfair treatment.

Expansion in South Africa.—In South Africa the policy of the Government was more uncertain and wavering. It could not make up its mind what to do about the Boer "trekkers": it did not wish to extend its responsibilities, or to force its rule upon unwilling subjects; but, on the other hand, the Boers were causing trouble among the natives. It could not make up its mind what to do about the natives, whether to leave them alone or to bring them under control. In 1843, as the Boers in Natal were causing unrest among the Kaffirs, Sir Robert Peel's Government authorised the annexation of *Natal*, which was later to become the most English part of South Africa.* And at the same time treaties of protection were made with a series of native States on the north of Cape Colony, between the colony and the Boers. But this system of protected states did not work. In 1846, when Grey's administration began, a formidable Kaffir war broke out, while there was constant friction between the protected native States (which were badly governed) and the Boers of the Orange Free State. Grey sent out Sir Harry Smith, a vigorous veteran of the Peninsular War, to deal with the situation (1847). Smith decided that the only way to ensure peace was to bring the whole region under control. He therefore annexed British Kaffraria (between Cape Colony and Natal), extended the boundary of Cape Colony northwards to the Orange River (1847), and finally annexed the whole of the territory as far as the Vaal River, that is, the native protectorates and the Orange Free State. Some of the Boers resisted: they were beaten at *Boomplatz* (1848), and withdrew to the Transvaal. But the majority remained, quite content with British authority so long as the Government was dealing firmly (as Smith was doing) with the natives.

Change of Policy.—In 1850, however, a new Kaffir war broke out. It was the most formidable of the series. Grey came

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*b*.

to the conclusion that Smith's policy did not bring peace, but involved a constant extension of territory. He was satisfied also that the Boers wanted to be independent, and that they would be most likely to settle down quietly if they were left alone. He therefore decided to reverse Smith's policy, to be content with Cape Colony and Natal, and within these limits to establish the regular system of self-government. In 1852, therefore, Smith was recalled; the independence of the Boers beyond the Vaal (Transvaal) was recognised by the Sand River Convention; and two years later, after Grey had ceased to be Colonial Secretary, his policy was completed by the recognition of the independence of the Orange Free State (Bloemfontein Convention, 1854) and by the establishment in Cape Colony of representative institutions.

The result of this government's work was, therefore, that the Canadian and Australian colonies had been endowed with responsible government, while both New Zealand and South Africa were well on the way to the same system.

Palmerston and Don Pacifico.—The most powerful and popular member of the Russell Government was its high-spirited Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston. Though he was anything but a Radical, he had a genuine sympathy with Liberal movements everywhere, and under his direction the influence of Britain was everywhere used on that side. He kept foreign affairs very much in his own hands, and both the queen and the Prime Minister often complained that he made important decisions without consulting them. Sober and conservative politicians such as his predecessor, Lord Aberdeen, and earnest pacifists like Cobden, deeply distrusted his often meddlesome and high-handed treatment of foreign affairs. In 1851 a concerted attack upon him was made by the Peelites, the Conservatives and the Cobdenite Radicals, on the ground of the way in which he had treated the Greek Government in what was known as the Don Pacifico case. The Greek Government had in Palmerston's view treated unfairly certain British subjects, including Don Pacifico, a Levantine Jew, and Palmerston, demanding immediate redress, had threatened a blockade of the Greek coast. Against a formidable combination of all the ablest speakers in the House of Commons, Palmerston defended himself with such courage that he carried with him the majority of the House. He had become the most popular figure in British politics. But his autocratic conduct of foreign affairs became intolerable to his colleagues. In 1850 the

queen had demanded that he should not send out dispatches until they were approved, or alter them after they were approved, as he sometimes did. In 1851, when Prince Napoleon, who had been elected President of the French Republic, carried a *coup d'état* which turned him into the all but irresponsible head of the State, Palmerston expressed his approval to the French ambassador, though he had been instructed by the Cabinet to preserve strict neutrality. Upon this his resignation was demanded, and he went out of office. He soon had his revenge, defeating the Government on a militia Bill, and forcing it to resign.

Political Confusion.—This episode not only ended Russell's Liberal Government, it produced a state of confusion in English politics; for now the Liberals as well as the Conservatives were split, and nobody could form a government which could command a majority in the House of Commons. The Conservatives under Lord Derby and Disraeli tried their hand. This ministry lasted for only a few months (February–December, 1852). But it lasted long enough to make it plain that even the Protectionist Conservatives dared not now interfere with the system of Free Trade under which the country was thriving. The deadlock was at length ended by the formation of a Peelite and Liberal coalition, under Lord Aberdeen, which was ultimately to lead to a fusion of the two groups.

3. Religious Movements

Nineteenth-century Britain was deeply concerned about religious questions. The evangelical movement, which had been dominant in the early part of the century, had not only influenced the life of the people, it had profoundly affected both national and imperial policy. But after 1830 a new movement began within the English Church, which challenged not only some of the fundamental ideas of the evangelicals, but also the whole relation of Church and State as it had hitherto been conceived in England.

The Oxford Movement.—The founders of this movement were a group of earnest and scholarly young clergymen at Oxford—J. H. Newman, R. H. Froude, E. B. Pusey, John Keble, and others. They were shocked by the way in which reformers were laying sacrilegious hands upon the Church: in the first instance, their protest was against the whole Liberal movement, and the power over the life of the Church which it claimed for Parliament. They

exalted the authority and tradition of the Church as against the authority of private interpretation of the Bible, and State-imposed formularies. They refused to think of the English Church as having had its beginning in the Reformation, and claimed that it had a continuous descent from the Church of the Fathers; in short, their attitude was very like that of the Anglo-Catholics of the seventeenth century. They expounded their views in a series of "Tracts," whence they were often called "Tractarians." In the last of these, Tract Ninety, Newman strove to show that there was no essential incompatibility between the doctrines of the Church of England and those of the Church of Rome; that they were two branches of one Catholic Church with a common tradition and inspiration.

Its Influence.—The Tractarians had a profound influence, first in Oxford where many of the ablest of the rising men, like Gladstone, imbibed their ideas; and gradually throughout the English Church. Their influence was greatest among the clergy, especially perhaps because their teaching exalted the priestly office. In many ways it led to increased fervour and earnestness; it led also to an added interest in rites and ceremonies. A conflict, often bitter, raged between the new school and the old. As the movement progressed, many of its members found it impossible to reconcile their opinions with continued membership of the State-controlled Church of England. Newman, the greatest leader of the movement, went over to Rome in 1845, and many others followed him. Another secession followed a few years later, when in 1850 the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council undertook to decide whether the opinions of a clergymen named Gorham were or were not in accordance with the tenets of the Church of England. This evidence of lay control drove Manning and others along the road which Newman had followed.

The Roman Catholics.—In this way, and for other reasons also, the Roman Catholic Church was steadily increasing its numbers and influence in England. In 1850 the Pope recognised this growth by appointing a series of bishops for England, with territorial titles. This aroused an outburst of the old anti-Roman sentiment, and in 1850 Lord John Russell tried to prohibit the Pope's plan by means of an Ecclesiastical Titles Act. There was a storm of controversy for a year. The Roman Church disregarded it, and the Act became a dead letter.

The Free Church of Scotland.—A controversy in some

ways akin to that which was raised by the Oxford Tractarians also arose in Scotland. Like the Tractarians, ardent Presbyterians refused to submit to outside interference with the organisation of the Church. The General Assembly of the Scottish Church asserted the right of congregations to reject ministers appointed by lay patrons. The law-courts and the House of Lords, regarding the right of presentation as a form of property, upheld the right of the patrons. Thereupon the General Assembly repudiated the right of law-courts, or of any lay power, even Parliament itself, to meddle in spiritual matters. Rather than submit, half the clergy of Scotland left their parishes, manses and glebes. Within a year five hundred new churches had been built for them, and the Free Church of Scotland was at work in full vigour. The disruption of the Church of Scotland (1843) was a heroic act, which showed how sincere and strong was the religious life of the period.

4. The Conquest of North-Western India

The interval of peace which India had enjoyed between 1826 and 1839 was followed by a new period of war and conquest, extending almost without a break to 1856.*

The North-West Frontier.—Since 1818 the frontier of the British Indian empire had followed the line of the River Indus. Beyond this line lay three unsubdued powers. The region of Sind, on the Lower Indus, was occupied by a group of Mohammedan emirs. The wide and fertile plain of the Punjab—the country of the Upper Indus and its great tributaries—was ruled by the military power of the Sikhs, a religious sect who had extended their control over the Mohammedan and Hindu population. The great organiser of the Sikh empire, Ranjit Singh, who had employed European adventurers to train his army, was one of the ablest of Indian statesmen. Until his death in 1839 he was careful to maintain friendly relations with the British *raj;* but it was doubtful whether his successors would be able to hold in check the formidable force he had built up. Beyond the Sikhs lay the wild Afghan tribes in their mountains, nearly always on bad terms with their neighbours in the plains.

The First Afghan War.—Russia had since 1815 been steadily engaged in the conquest of Central Asia.† In the time of

* See School Atlas, Plate 54.
† See School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

Napoleon she had projected an advance upon India, and Palmerston believed that she still entertained this idea. When it was learnt that Russian agents had visited Kabul, the Afghan capital, and had been well received, these suspicions deepened. The Governor-General, Lord Auckland *—a friend of Palmerston—resolved that a friendly prince must be placed upon the throne of Afghanistan. He took up the cause of an exiled claimant, Shah Shuja, who had been excluded by a more vigorous prince, Dost Mohammed. The Sikhs and the Amirs of Sind were persuaded to give free passage for an army ; and

FIG. 38.—The North-West Frontier of India.

in 1839 Shah Shuja was enthroned at Kabul under the protection of a British army and a British resident. For a time the Afghans remained sullenly quiet. Then the army of occupation found that it was isolated. The Resident, trying to negotiate for a retreat, was murdered (1841). The army had to attempt to fight its way back through the defiles of the Khyber Pass in the dead of winter. It was practically annihilated : the worst disaster that had ever befallen British arms in India.

Withdrawal.—Half the strength of the British in India rested

* There is a short Life of Auckland by L. J. Trotter (Rulers of India).

upon the prestige of victory. This disaster had to be redeemed. Lord Ellenborough was sent out to perform this task. Two armies marched against Kabul, the one by Kandahar, the other by the Khyber Pass (1842). Kabul was occupied, only to be evacuated as soon as the prisoners had been surrendered ; and Dost Mohammed was left to himself, as he ought to have been from the beginning.

Conquest of Sind.—But these events broke the tradition of British invincibility, and caused unrest throughout the north-west. In 1843 the unruly levies at Sind attacked the British residency at Hyderabad. This was used as an excuse for the annexation of Sind, after the Sindis had been defeated by Sir Charles Napier at *Miani*. The annexation was unnecessary. It was in part provoked by the desire to restore British prestige, and there was a double truth in the famous punning despatch whereby Napier announced his conquest—"Peccavi" (I have Sind). The new province was added to the Presidency of Bombay.

First Sikh War.—More serious was the effect upon the Sikh army, which had got out of hand since Ranjit Singh's death. It began to raid the British territory beyond the Sutlej ; and in December, 1845, it crossed the Sutlej in force, bent upon conquest and plunder. Sir Henry Hardinge,* an old soldier who had succeeded Ellenborough as Governor-General (1844), was ready for them. But the Indian army, under Sir Hugh Gough, had harder fighting against the warlike Sikhs than they had yet had to face from any Indian State. Four fierce battles, at *Mudki*, at *Firozshah*, at *Aliwal*, and finally, the fiercest of all, at *Sobraon*, had to be fought (1846) ere the Sikhs would acknowledge themselves defeated. Their lands in the Punjab were not annexed, nor was their army disbanded. For a time the Punjab became a sort of protectorate, with Sir Henry Lawrence as British representative.

5. Dalhousie in India

Second Sikh War.—In 1848 Lord Dalhousie,† one of Peel's young men, came out to India as Hardinge's successor. He was one of the ablest and one of the most devoted in the long line of British rulers in India, deserving to rank with Warren Hastings and

* There is a short Life of Hardinge by his son (Rulers of India).

† There is a short Life of Dalhousie by Sir W. W. Hunter (Rulers of India).

Wellesley. Before he had been in the country three months (April 1848), the Sikhs were once more up in arms. The rising started at *Multan*, where two British officers were murdered, and for some months the skill and daring of a young officer, Herbert Edwardes, confined the trouble to that region. But by September the rising had spread over the whole of the Punjab. At the desperate battle of *Chillianwalla* (January 1849) the British army suffered heavier losses than in any previous Indian battle. But in the next month the Sikhs were completely defeated at *Gujerat*, which ended the war. No other Indian province had ever offered such fierce resistance.

The Punjab Annexed.—After this second war, annexation was inevitable. The annexation of the rich and fertile land of the Punjab brought British India to its natural frontiers, the great mountain ranges of the north-west. Dalhousie set himself to make the province a model of good government; he drained the other provinces of their best men; and under the firm and able rule of John Lawrence * the province enjoyed so much prosperity that the Sikhs became reconciled to British supremacy. Their loyalty in the Mutiny, only eight years after their defeat, saved the situation.

Second Burmese War.—The Punjab was not Dalhousie's only conquest. In 1852, after many provocations, he was involved in the Second Burmese War. A brilliant campaign, planned beforehand in every detail, ended in the defeat of the Burmese, and the annexation of *Pegu* or Lower Burma—the delta of the Irrawaddy—with the great trading city of Rangoon.

The Doctrine of "Lapse."—Dalhousie was a very able and honest man, devoured by a sense of responsibility, and of the magnitude of the task which Britain had undertaken in India. He was deeply impressed by the defects of the system of "subsidiary alliances" whereby the Company's power over the native princes had been secured; for, while these treaties guaranteed the princes' security, they left them free to misgovern their subjects. Impatient of injustice and inefficiency, he took the view that the native States ought to be brought under direct British rule as rapidly as their treaty rights permitted. In order to hasten the process, he consistently refused to allow the princes to adopt heirs when they had no sons; and laid down the doctrine that, in the absence of a natural heir, a dependent State must

* There is a short Life of John Lawrence by Sir Charles Aitchison (Rulers of India).

"lapse" to the suzerain power. Under the doctrine of lapse he annexed no less than eight States, covering an area of 150,000 square miles. The most important of these was the great Maratha State of Nagpore, which to-day forms the main part of the Central Provinces.

Annexation of Oudh.—Dalhousie's intolerance of misgovernment led him also, in 1854, to annex the State of Oudh, the Company's oldest ally. Unquestionably Oudh had been shockingly misgoverned. But its annexation, coming on the head of so many others, created a deep feeling of insecurity among the Indian princes, and was one of the causes of the Mutiny, which broke out the year after Dalhousie left India.

Dalhousie's Reforming Work.—In the service of India Dalhousie spent himself and wore himself out. Not only did he labour incessantly to improve the administration in the old provinces as well as the new, he made it his aim to introduce the benefits of Western civilisation as rapidly as possible. He planned the railway system, and saw the first line opened; he constructed the first telegraph lines; he laid down great trunk roads, and constructed great irrigation canals; he systematically explored the trade-resources of India, and developed new lines of trade; he reconstructed old ports and harbours and opened new ones. During his period of office the exports and imports of the country were doubled. But the unchanging East was made to feel that it was being hurried and hustled into new ways of life; and this also had its share in making the Mutiny possible.

Completion of the Conquest of India.—Substantially the structure of the Indian empire was completed by Dalhousie, just a hundred years after the battle of Plassey, and just fifty years after Wellesley's recall. For the first time in all its long history the whole of India was now united under a single rule. Within its limits war had been wholly banished, and an equal justice was administered under known and published laws. At the same time the new wine of Western civilisation was being poured into the ancient wine-skins of Indian society. The completion of the conquest ends the first stage in the history of British India. The second stage—the permeation of Indian life by the ideas and methods of the West—was just beginning. Even the beginning was causing unrest.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE ERA OF PALMERSTON (1852–1865)

1. Prosperity and Quiescence

An Era of Complacency.—In 1851 a great exhibition, held in a crystal palace erected in Hyde Park, celebrated the triumphs of British industry, and displayed to the world its unchallenged supremacy. Not only in Britain but in Europe, the revolutionary troubles of the first half of the century were now over, and there was a general hope that the Great Exhibition would mark the establishment of settled peace. This hope was disappointed : ere long there was to begin the first of a series of European wars which kept Europe in a state of disturbance until 1880. But in all these wars (after the first) Britain had no part. Except in the outlying parts of her empire, she enjoyed, from 1858 to 1880, unbroken peace and growing prosperity. Her internal troubles seemed to have come to an end. Wages were steadily rising, while the cost of living decreased ; and her working people seemed to be content. Her institutions were admired and imitated everywhere in the world. This was, therefore, a period of self-complacency, in which, for a time, reforming activity almost ceased.

Social Ills.—Not that there were not, in Britain, many evils that needed to be amended. The industrial towns were still ugly and unhealthy places, though the new municipalities were gradually improving them : in all of them there were revolting slums unfit for human habitation. The mass of the population was still sunk in ignorance, for the schools provided by the religious denominations could not accommodate half of the children. The hours of work were still far too long, and the conditions of labour were often cruelly hard. The great mass of working people had no prospect save a life of endless toil, and they had no protection against the distress due to sickness or unemployment save the harsh assistance of the Poor Law. But in all these respects a steady improvement was taking place—the working of the Factory Acts, the growth of collective bargaining through Trade Unions (though these were still small and weak), the steady rise in the level of wages, the steady fall in prices, all meant

improvement ; and in these conditions the violent protests of the previous period died down.

Self-help.—This generation, indeed, was ready to believe that —since the old entrenched power of privileged classes had been overthrown—the natural working of economic forces would of itself bring about justice and happiness ; and the steady rise of wages and fall of prices seemed to justify this view. It was not, men held, the business of the State to create the conditions of well-being, but only to remove the obstacles which stood in the way of each man's pursuit of his own advantage. " Self-help " was the gospel of the time ; and the working people accepted this view equally with their employers.

Co-operation.—Various working-class organisations were being created which were inspired by this idea. In 1844 the great co-operative movement had been started by a little group of workmen in Rochdale, who opened a modest store to supply their own needs, and arranged that the profits which would otherwise have gone to shopkeepers should be distributed amongst them, partly in dividends and bonus, partly in the provision of recreation and education. This movement was spreading rapidly in the manufacturing districts, and it gave to many working folk the chance of showing their powers of organisation and of working for a common cause. Numerous friendly societies were serving a similar function, and encouraging thrift.

National Trade Unionism.—Most important of all, the trade union movement was taking a new start. It was abandoning the revolutionary aims by which it had largely been governed down to the collapse of the Chartist movement in 1848. Hitherto trade unions had been little local clubs. In 1851 the first great national union—the Amalgamated Society of Engineers—was created by the combination of a large number of local clubs ; and other trades followed suit. These powerful bodies were able to maintain a whole-time staff of skilled negotiators, who could deal with the employers on more equal terms ; they were able also, out of their large funds, to pay substantial benefits to their members when they were ill or out of work. Not wishing to waste their funds in disputes, they ceased to consider that their main job was to fight the employers, and aimed rather at getting improved conditions by steady negotiation, and by forcing the worse employers to keep up to the level of the best. In this way the trade union movement was making steady progress ; but it was mainly among the skilled workers that this new type of

highly organised national unions throve ; the mass of unskilled workers were still unprotected.

The Christian Socialists : Mill : Marx.—There were still groups of reformers who urged the need for great changes in the social order. One of these was the group who called themselves Christian Socialists—F. D. Maurice, Charles Kingsley, and others. In their view, to work for a reorganisation of society was an essential part of Christianity. Kingsley wrote, in *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*, bitter indictments of the existing order. The Christian Socialists strove to set on foot co-operative industrial enterprises, in which groups of workmen should be their own employers ; and in one or two trades they had a modest degree of success. Again, Disraeli and the Young England group were still preaching the ideas that Disraeli had put forth in his novel *Sybil*, in which he had drawn a picture of the division of England into the " two nations " of the rich and the poor, and suggested that the old nobility should take the lead in an attempt to fight the ugliness of industrialism ; but no very definite results followed from this. Even the economist, John Stuart Mill, was deeply unhappy about the social condition of the country, and in his *Political Economy*, published in 1848, propounded ideas which departed widely from the ruling ideas of the time. And, since 1849, there had been living obscurely in London a man whose teachings were to exercise a profound influence in the future—an exiled German Jew named Karl Marx. His theory was that under the system which he called " Capitalism " the rich must become fewer and richer and the poor more numerous and poorer. The theory was contradicted by the facts. But on it he based the doctrine that there must inevitably be a war between rich and poor, and that the " proletariat " or wage-earning mass must establish their supremacy by revolutionary means.

Contentment.—None of these teachings, however, had much influence as yet either upon public opinion or upon Parliament and its work, except in so far as they helped to create a more humane feeling, and a greater willingness to extend Factory Acts and other legislation of the same kind. Upon the whole, all classes in Britain were content, and believed that things were getting steadily better, that the British system was nearly perfect, and that no further sweeping changes were needed.

Literature.—The early Victorian period was not only a time of great material prosperity, it was a time of great intellectual distinc-

tion. A very remarkable group of great writers had arisen since 1830 : in poetry, Tennyson and Browning ; in prose, Carlyle and Newman and Ruskin and Macaulay and John Stuart Mill ; in fiction, Dickens and Thackeray and the Brontës and Disraeli and Trollope, were all at the height of their powers. All of these great writers had been born during the Napoleonic wars ; all had lived through the distresses of the following period, and their work is deeply marked by its influence. Nearly all of them were dissatisfied with one or another aspect of their country's life, and Dickens, who was perhaps the greatest of them, did a great deal to arouse the anger of his generation against injustices and cruelties of many kinds. But nearly all of them were satisfied that Britain was making progress, and that her amended social and political system put into the people's hands the means of improving their own condition. Thus the Mid-Victorian age was, on the whole, an era of contentment ; and this was reflected in a period of political quiescence that separated the reforming activity of the 'thirties and 'forties from the later era of change which followed.

2. The Coalition and the Crimean War (1852–1856)

Gladstone's Finance.—In Lord Aberdeen's coalition ministry of Peelites and Liberals, which took office in 1852, there were two outstanding personalities. The one was the brisk and high-spirited Lord Palmerston, who (though he now held the office of Home Secretary) was chiefly interested in pursuing a vigorous foreign policy of opposition to European despotism and especially to Russia. The other was Peel's great disciple, W. E. Gladstone, who became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and hoped for a period of peace and retrenchment, in which the beneficent effects of trade expansion might be enjoyed to the full. In the Budget of 1853 Gladstone for the first time displayed his financial genius, sweeping away many duties and making another long step towards complete freedom of trade.

Russia and Turkey.—But the interval of peace was not to last long ; for Britain found herself drawn into a futile and unnecessary war with Russia. Russia had long wanted to extend her power over the European part of the Turkish Empire. She regarded herself as the protector of the Christian subjects of the Turk, and in that capacity had helped in the emancipation of the Greeks in 1829. She also wanted to get access to open water in the Mediterranean.

At one time (1833) she had tried to establish a sort of protectorate over Turkey, but had been defeated by Palmerston's opposition (p. 548). In 1844, and again in 1853, she had urged upon British statesmen that Turkey was not only a reactionary but a decaying power, and had suggested that the best way of avoiding trouble was to arrange quietly for a partition of the Turkish Empire. These advances had been rejected. The generally accepted view in Britain (which was strongly held by Palmerston) was that Turkey must be upheld as a bulwark against Russia ; and that Turkey could be made to reform her methods of government.

Outbreak of War.—Meanwhile, a quarrel had arisen over the right to appoint priests to take charge of the Holy Places at Jerusalem. The Tsar claimed that Greek priests should be appointed. On the other hand, Napoleon III, who had just made himself Emperor of the French by a *coup d'état*, and was anxious to win prestige, took up the cause of the Latin priests ; and the Sultan, anxious to win protectors against Russia, had rejected the Tsar's claim. Thereupon the Tsar put forward a claim to be recognised as the protector of all the Greek Christians in the Turkish Empire, and when this claim was rejected, sent armies to occupy "the Danubian provinces," *i.e.* Moldavia and Wallachia, the modern kingdom of Rumania. Upon this both France and Britain came to the protection of Turkey. In March 1854, war was declared against Russia, and a joint army was sent to Varna (on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria) to aid the Turks in repelling the Russian aggression. The Tsar, who had failed to make any successful advance even against the Turks alone, withdrew his troops.

FIG. 39.—The Crimea.

Invasion of the Crimea.—Peace might now have been made. But the allies resolved to pursue the attack against Russia. A naval expedition was sent into the Baltic ; it bombarded the fortress of Cronstadt without producing any effect. And a combined French and British force was sent to the Crimean peninsula,* where the

* For the Crimean War, see the larger Atlas, Plate 68*a* and *b*.

Tsar was building a naval base at Sevastopol. If the attack had been promptly made, Sevastopol might have been seized before its fortifications could be completed. But there were long delays before the allied army was landed on the coast of the Crimea at Eupatoria (September 1854). It defeated a Russian army which attempted to resist its advance, in the battle of the *Alma*, in which the brunt was borne by the British troops. Then, instead of making a dash for Sevastopol (which was not prepared for defence), the allies settled down to besiege the fortress. They had to repel several attacks by Russian armies which were thrown into the peninsula. One of these was an attack on *Balaklava* (October), the British base : it was repelled after hard fighting, in which the daring but misdirected charge of the Light Brigade was the most famous episode. Another attempt to relieve the fortress was beaten back in the hard-fought "soldiers' battle" of *Inkerman* (November).

Fall of Aberdeen.—Then the besiegers had to settle down for the winter. The earlier events of the campaign had shown that, though British soldiers could fight as well as ever, the organisation of the army needed to be reconstructed ; and this was perhaps the most useful lesson of the war. The cruelties of the Russian winter showed that no adequate provision had been made for medical service or even for commissariat. By January 1855, more than half of the army was in hospital, under the most cruel conditions. This was the first war in which newspaper correspondents accompanied an army in the field ; and their revelations aroused such a storm of indignation at home that the Government was forced to resign. Lord Aberdeen and all the Peelites withdrew, and Lord Palmerston was called to power by the almost unanimous demand of the nation.

Florence Nightingale.—Palmerston undoubtedly put greater energy and vigour into the conduct of the war. But the amendment of the real evil had already been begun by Sidney Herbert, the Secretary for War, who had happily come into contact with a woman of genius, Florence Nightingale,* to whom he gave ample powers. Miss Nightingale became famous throughout Britain as "the Lady with the Lamp," tending the wounded soldiers. But she was far from being merely a gentle ministering angel. She had a genius for organisation ; and, backed by intense public feeling, she was

* There is a brilliant essay on Florence Nightingale by Lytton Strachey in *Eminent Victorians*.

able to begin the reorganisation of the whole medical service of the British Army, and especially the provision of skilled nursing. Later, taking advantage of the immense popularity she had won, she took in hand the system of nursing at home. Her life, which did not end until 1910, was mainly given to this work ; to this masterful lady, more than to any other single person, we owe the development of an efficient system of nursing in hospitals and in private homes.

End of the War.—Another long campaign had to be fought in 1855 before the fortress of Sevastopol was captured by assault in September of that year ; and a final Russian attempt to relieve the siege had to be beaten off in the battle of the *Tchernaya* (August), in which the main part was played by the French, aided by a small force of Italians who had been sent by the King of Sardinia as a means of winning the friendship of France and Britain. Meanwhile, in the Caucasus, a Russian army had been besieging the Turkish fortress of *Kars*, whose long resistance was mainly due to three British officers ; Kars was starved into surrender in November 1855.

Results of the War.—This was the end of the war. After so many months, and so lavish an expenditure of lives and money, one Russian town was captured and one Turkish town was lost. Peace was concluded at Paris in 1856, when both towns were restored. The treaty decided that no naval vessels of any Power except Turkey should pass through the Bosphorus, and thus locked Russia into the Black Sea, which was declared to be neutral ; it was decided also that Sevastopol should be dismantled, and that Russia should keep no warships in the Black Sea. Fourteen years later, Russia repudiated these obligations. Russia's claim to a protectorate over the Christian subjects of Turkey was also formally denied ; but twenty years later they were reasserted. The Sultan promised great reforms, which he never carried out. Thus the Crimean War found no solution for the Eastern Question. The Powers seized the occasion of the Paris Conference to lay down new principles in regard to the conduct of war at sea, whereby Britain gave up a right which she had always asserted. The practice of privateering was prohibited ; and it was laid down that cargoes carried by neutral vessels, other than contraband, should be immune from seizure. These provisions, which had nothing to do with the Russian quarrel, were the only lasting results of the war, upon which so many lives and so much treasure had been squandered.

3. The Ascendancy of Palmerston (1856–1865)

Palmerston's Government. — The Crimean War left Palmerston at the height of his prestige, as the minister of victory. His popularity was immense. When, in 1857, his high-handed dealings with China (below, p. 588) were challenged in Parliament, and he was defeated, he appealed to the country, and returned with a greatly increased majority. With one brief interval in 1858–1859, he remained at the head of the British Government until his death in 1865. The gay, high-spirited old man truly represented the temper of the British middle-class in this era of self-confident prosperity. So long as he lived, domestic questions fell into the background, and the maintenance of British prestige abroad became the chief interest of politics. It was a period of prosperity and political stagnation at home, and of stirring events abroad.

Conspiracy to Murder.—Palmerston's foreign policy was always the object of strong criticism. The old Tories disliked his friendliness to Liberal movements abroad; the Peelites and the Manchester Radicals disliked his meddlesomeness and his readiness to involve the country in risky situations. In 1858 they found a question upon which they could unite against him. A bomb outrage against Napoleon III was known to have been planned by Italian refugees in London, who were angry because Napoleon did not aid the Italian nationalist movement. Great indignation was expressed in France against Britain for harbouring the assassins. Palmerston, anxious to maintain friendly relations with France, introduced a Conspiracy to Murder Bill which was generally regarded as being dictated by France. Palmerston's majority deserted him, and he was defeated. Lord Derby, the leader of the Conservatives, took office, with Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader in the Commons.

Derby's Ministry.—The Conservative ministry of 1858 was almost as short-lived as its predecessor of 1852. But it lasted long enough to make it clear that the Conservatives had definitely abandoned Protection. It was responsible for the organisation of the volunteer movement as a supplement to the Army, and as an expression of the public distrust of the ambitions of Napoleon III. It fell on the defeat of an elaborate Reform Bill introduced by Disraeli, who looked to an extension of the franchise to restore the power of the Conservatives. But neither Parliament nor the country was yet

ready for a further step towards democracy; two previous Whig Bills, introduced by Lord John Russell, had both been rejected, and it was evident that the country was quite satisfied with things as they were.

Palmerston and Gladstone.—In 1859, therefore, the Conservative ministry fell, and Palmerston again became Prime Minister. The ministry thus established lasted until 1865. It included the leading Peelites, notably Gladstone; henceforth, after twelve years of precarious existence as a third party, they were incorporated in the Liberal party, to which they brought new elements of strength. Throughout these six years there was constant strain between Palmerston and Gladstone, who was becoming more Radical as he grew older. One thing alone held them together—their common sympathy for nationalist movements in Europe, and especially in Italy.

The Paper Duties.—But the astute old Prime Minister held his own. So long as he lived, no great issues could be raised in domestic politics. Gladstone had to content himself with the sphere of finance, in which he introduced a succession of brilliant budgets that completed the Free Trade system. One of these budgets gave rise to the only important domestic controversy of the period. In 1860 Gladstone proposed the abolition of the Paper Duties, in order to encourage the cheap Press. The House of Lords threw out his proposal. Thereupon Gladstone embodied the proposal in his Budget, which the Lords could not touch. This was attacked as an unconstitutional act; it implied a definite victory for the House of Commons over the House of Lords. But it was a very placid period in which so small a matter could be a subject of acute controversy.

Foreign Troubles.—These placid years were, however, full of excitements abroad. They began immediately after the Crimean War, and they lasted until after Palmerston's death. First came little wars with Persia and China; then the tragedy of the Indian Mutiny; then the establishment of Italian freedom and unity; then the great Civil War in the United States; and finally the rise of Prussia to supremacy in Germany, by means of the Danish War of 1864 and the Austrian War of 1866. All these events were of immense importance to the British peoples.

Persian War.—Persia, at the instigation of Russia, had invaded Afghanistan at the end of the Crimean War. Although Britain had no responsibility for Afghanistan, Palmerston could not overlook this

evidence of Russian designs. A British expedition was sent to the Persian Gulf, and the Shah of Persia was forced to withdraw from Herat, which he had occupied.*

Second Chinese War.—The second war with China, which also broke out in 1857, was more serious, and marked an important change in the relations between Europe and the Far East. The Chinese authorities at Canton seized a little Chinese vessel called the *Arrow*, which had some British officers and flew the British flag. The British agent at Hong-Kong demanded the release of the crew, which was granted ; but he also made other demands, which were rejected. Thereupon Canton was bombarded, and open war began. It was on this high-handed action that the House of Commons overthrew Palmerston, and the electors supported him. The war went on, and France co-operated with Britain ; but there was some delay, owing to the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny, which made it necessary to divert to India the troops needed for China. In 1858 Canton was occupied and pillaged, and the Taku forts, which guarded the river-route to Peking, were destroyed. This led the Chinese Government to accept the allied demands (June 1858). A year later, when the time came for ratification, the Chinese Government refused to admit the Western envoys, and beat off their fleets from Taku. In 1860 the Taku forts were finally captured. But the Chinese were so reluctant to submit to dictation from the barbarians that they arrested and tortured the envoys sent to deal with them. Thereupon the Emperor's summer palace was looted and burnt to the ground ; and the Chinese Government submitted. It was forced to pay a heavy indemnity, and to agree to receive residents at Peking, and foreign consuls at the Treaty Ports. Sordid as it was, this war had momentous consequences, because it definitely forced open the gates of China to Western influences, and compelled the Chinese Government to recognise the superior strength of the Western powers. It is therefore a landmark in the relations between East and West.

4. The Indian Mutiny (1857–1858)

In May 1857 the British Empire in India was suddenly exposed to the most terrible menace in its history. At some of the most

* For Asia, see School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

important centres in the country the Sepoy Army, by whose means the British power had in the main been established and was maintained, broke into revolt, and for several months the very existence of the Empire seemed to be threatened.

Unrest in India.—A good deal of unrest had been caused in India by the rapidity with which innovations had recently been made, especially under Dalhousie. The displacement of a number of native dynasties had created a sense of insecurity, and some of the dethroned families were very ready to make trouble. In Oudh, more particularly, which had only been annexed in 1856, there was a great deal of unrest, and the *talukdars* or native landholders were convinced that they had been unjustly treated. There was a widespread suspicion that the British Government meant to attack the time-honoured religious and social usages of India ; and secret influences were at work fomenting these fears. But all this would have meant nothing if it had not predisposed the sepoys to revolt : when the revolt came, it was not a popular rising anywhere except in Oudh ; it was almost exclusively a military rebellion. Even so, it did not affect the greater part of the country. The Presidencies of Madras and Bombay were practically undisturbed ; in Bengal proper there was only momentary trouble, which was quickly suppressed ; and even the recently conquered province of the Punjab remained loyal, and supplied many of the troops necessary for the reduction of the Mutiny. The disturbances were, in fact, limited to the Upper Ganges valley, from Delhi to Allahabad, though it later spread to the native States of Central India.*

Sepoy Grievances.—The sepoys had grievances of their own, upon which the fomenters of discontent could work. Their area of service had been extended as the Empire grew. It was a grievance that they had had to cross the "black water" to fight in Burma. Their pay and allowances were felt to be inadequate. They knew that they had mainly won the Empire. They saw that they outnumbered the British forces in India by eight to one. The British prestige of invincibility had been impaired by the Afghan disaster of 1842, and by the Crimean War. On the head of all this came the introduction of a new rifle, whose greased cartridges had to be bitten. Rumour asserted that the grease was made from the fat

* For the area of the Indian Mutiny, see the larger Atlas, Introduction, p. 57, fig. 41.

of swine and cows; and the Mohammedan is defiled by touching swine's flesh, while the cow is sacred to the Hindu. This seemed to bear out the view that the British had a malignant design to destroy the faith of their subjects. The British officers were so convinced of the loyalty of their men that they paid little attention to the evidences of this unrest, and no precautions were taken.

Seizure of Delhi.—On May 10th, 1857, three native regiments at the military station of Meerut murdered their officers and marched to Delhi, where they were joined by the garrison.* A handful of

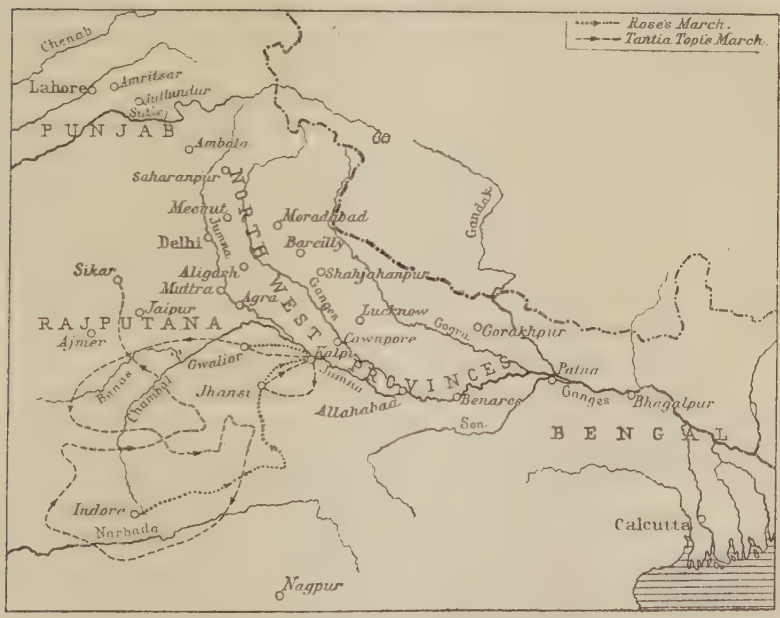

FIG. 40.—The Area of the Indian Mutiny.

British soldiers blew up the powder-magazine, and died in its ruins; a telegraph operator had time, before he was killed, to flash the news along the new wires to the Punjab; and these two heroic deeds perhaps saved the situation. But the mutineers controlled Delhi, the historic capital of India. They dragged out the old Mogul, who

* Two good novels dealing with the Indian Mutiny are Mrs. F. A. Steel's *On the Face of the Waters*, and R. E. Forrest's *Five Days*.

still lived in the faded splendour of Shah Jehan's palace, and proclaimed him Emperor.

The Revolt Spreads : Cawnpore.—Then there was a pause of three weeks, during which John Lawrence, in the Punjab, disarmed the sepoy regiments, assured himself of the loyalty of the Sikhs, and made ready to attack the mutineers at Delhi. In June, however, the revolt spread over the greater part of the Ganges valley. Many isolated British officers were slaughtered with their families, others were saved by the loyalty of their Indian servants. At Cawnpore * a small British force, with many women and children, endeavoured to defend themselves against tremendous odds. They accepted with gratitude the offer of a safe retreat given to them by the Nana Sahib, whom many of them had known as a friend ; but they left their entrenchments only to be mercilessly slaughtered (June 27th). The women and children were imprisoned : a fortnight later they were massacred in cold blood, and their bodies were thrust down a well. Meanwhile, the mutiny had spread to the great city of Lucknow, the capital of Oudh ; where less than 2,000 men—one-third of them loyal sepoys—and over 1,000 non-combatants were besieged by swarming crowds of enemies within the houses and gardens of the Residency.

The Recapture of Delhi.—Delhi and Lucknow were the main centres of the mutiny ; but all the country between them had passed out of control, and the two main centres had to be attacked from opposite directions—Delhi from the Punjab, Lucknow from Bengal. Fortunately the mutineers, being without leadership, made no attempt to use their overwhelming superiority of numbers, but waited to be attacked. All through June and July a small army of 4,000 men, British and Sikh, hung on to the Ridge, a line of rocky heights just outside Delhi : they were rather besieged than besieging. In August reinforcements came from the Punjab under the hero John Nicholson.† On September 14th the Kashmir Gate of the city was blown in, and the small attacking force stormed through the gap. Nicholson was killed at their head ; but after six days of street-fighting, Delhi was captured.

The Relief of Lucknow.—Meanwhile, at the other end of

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* Read Sir George Trevelyan's *Cawnpore*.

† There is a short Life of Nicholson by L. J. Trotter.

the line, still fiercer fighting was going on. Havelock,* starting from Allahabad with 2,000 men, marched under the blazing sun of an Indian July against Cawnpore. After fighting four pitched battles, he reached that city of horror the day after the women and children had been massacred : his men took vows of vengeance over the tragic well. Havelock had to be reinforced by Outram before he could cut his way through to Lucknow, fighting three more battles on the way. He saved the garrison of the Residency (September 25th), but had himself to endure a further siege. Thus, before the arrival of the troops who were being hurried out from Britain, the back of the Mutiny had been broken.

The End of the Mutiny.—But there was still long and hard fighting ere peace was fully restored. Sir Colin Campbell had to reconquer Oudh and the north-west provinces in detail, and his task was not completed until the summer of 1858. Meanwhile the revolt had spread to Central India, where the army of the loyal prince Sindhia joined the mutineers, and proclaimed Nana Sahib Peshwa, or head of the Marathas. Sir Hugh Rose had to fight a long and arduous campaign before the Maratha general, Tantia Topi, was subdued. By the autumn of 1858 the Mutiny had been finally crushed.

Clemency Canning.—It was not unnatural that the story of the mutiny, and especially the horrors of Cawnpore, should have given rise to a fierce lust for vengeance both among the British in India and at home. The gallantry of the loyal sepoys, the steadfastness of thousands of Indians, were too readily forgotten. During the suppression of the rising there were many instances of ferocity. But happily there was no orgy of revenge when it was over. Lord Canning, the Governor-General who had borne the responsibility of government throughout the troubles, kept his head. He earned the nickname of "Clemency Canning."† It was given in derision ; but the wise moderation which earned it perhaps saved the Indian Empire from later disasters.

End of the E.I.C.—After the Mutiny a reconstruction of the system of government in India became inevitable. By the *India Act*

* There is a short Life of Havelock by Archibald Forbes (English Men of Action).

† There is a short Life of Canning by Sir Henry Cunningham (Rulers of India).

of 1858 (which was drafted by Palmerston's Government, but actually carried by Derby's) the East India Company was abolished, and the Indian Empire was brought under the direct control of the British Crown, acting through a new Secretary of State, with whom was associated a Council of India. A proclamation was also issued in the name of the queen, promising to respect the rights of native princes, to give equal protection to all religions, and to admit the subjects of the Crown, without regard to race and creed, to all offices. Although the Act and the Proclamation did not in practice make very much difference, the direct assumption by the British Crown of responsibility for the well-being of 300,000,000 Indians represented the culmination of a long process of development. It seems incredible that this should have happened only one hundred years after the skirmish of Plassey.

5. European Wars and the American Civil War (1859–1865)

The Mutiny was no sooner over than great events abroad engrossed the attention of the British people, and presented difficult problems to British diplomacy.

Unification of Italy.—First came the unification of Italy, towards which Italian patriots, inspired by the exile Mazzini from his home in London, had so long striven in vain.* In 1859 Napoleon III of France, in agreement with Cavour, the great minister of the king of Sardinia, declared war against Austria, and tore from her the province of Lombardy, which was added to Sardinia. In 1860 the petty duchies of Northern Italy cast out their dukes, and voted for incorporation with the kingdom; Garibaldi with his gallant Thousand landed in Sicily and was the means of bringing the Bourbon kingdom of Naples and Sicily into the new national State; while the greater part of the Papal States, north of the Apennines, were also absorbed. The first stage of this development was due to the military intervention of France. But the later stages would most probably have been resisted or impeded by the European Powers if Palmerston and Russell, with the warm support of Gladstone, had not thrown all the weight of British influence upon the side of the Italians. Thus a new nation had entered the European family, and a great breach was made in the settlement of Vienna. The

* For the Unification of Italy, see School Atlas, Plate 25*d*.

unification of Italy was completed when Venetia was added after the Austro-Prussian war of 1866, and Rome during the Franco-German war of 1870.

The American Civil War.—Next came, in 1860–1865, the terrible civil war in the United States of America.* This so directly concerned the British peoples, and so seriously affected the relations of the two main branches of the English-speaking race, that more than a passing mention of it is necessary.

Growth of the United States.—Since 1815 the population of the United States had been increasing with unprecedented rapidity. Immigrants had poured in by hundreds of thousands, at first mainly from Britain, then from Ireland (especially after the famines of 1822 and 1846), and finally, after the abortive revolutions of 1848, from the countries of western Europe, particularly Germany. Thirteen new States were added to the Union between 1815 and 1860.† The population was rapidly spreading across the American Continent. In 1846 a war with Mexico tore from that country a vast area stretching to the Pacific; and in 1848 the discovery of gold in a part of the conquered area—California—brought the tide of settlement to the shores of the Pacific.

Free States and Slave States.—As the population grew, the cleavage became more marked between the northern States, in which slavery had ceased to exist, and the southern States whose whole economic life depended upon slavery. Most of the immigrants went to the northern States: the southern States began to fear that they would be swamped, and strove to maintain the slave-system over as wide an area as that in which slavery was prohibited. This conflict was the central fact in American politics throughout the period 1815 to 1860. It was in part the cause of the Mexican War: Mexico had abolished slavery, but slavery was introduced in the States which were made out of the territory conquered from her. In 1820, by what was known as the Missouri Compromise, it was agreed that all States south of 36° 30′ should be organised as slave States.‡ But this compromise broke down; in 1848 California, which was south of the line, refused to accept slavery. In 1850 a new compromise was

* For the campaigns of the American Civil War, see the larger Atlas, Plate 51.

† School Atlas, Plate 51.

‡ See the larger Atlas, Plate 73*d*.

made, which gave slave owners the right to claim fugitive slaves who had taken refuge in the northern States. But this only intensified the abolitionist sentiment of the north. Elaborate methods were organised to assist slaves to escape to Canada, where (because it was British territory) they automatically became free.

Danger of Disruption.—The question threatened to tear the Union asunder. It was impossible to make slavery illegal, as the British Parliament had done, because the Constitution reserved full power in this matter to the individual States. Yet it was clear that two groups of States could not long continue in fellowship while their whole organisation was based upon such different ideas. Abraham Lincoln,* an Illinois lawyer who was a candidate for the presidency in 1860, declared that "this Government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free." Yet there was no means, under the constitution, by which this cleavage could be bridged; not even Lincoln ever suggested that the constitutional rights of the States should be overridden.

The Civil War.—In 1860 Lincoln was elected President by a minority vote. His election so alarmed the southern States that they resolved to secede from the Union, which they claimed the right to do. The North denied the right of any State to secede; and on this issue, not on the direct issue of slavery, civil war broke out. The war lasted for five years, 1861 to 1865. Though the Confederates (as the Seceders called themselves) were hopelessly outnumbered and immeasurably poorer than their rivals, they held out with great valour under their noble leader, Lee; and there was terrible slaughter ere their resistance was beaten down. Then, by an amendment of the Constitution forced upon the southern States, slavery was declared illegal. The war cost more than a million lives, and an outlay of money which would have sufficed to purchase the freedom of every slave in the Union many times over, if the Constitution had permitted any such solution.

Britain and the Civil War.—This bitter and prolonged struggle was of the first importance to Britain. In the first place, her greatest industry depended upon the supply of raw cotton from the southern States. When the North declared a blockade of the southern States, a cotton famine followed in Lancashire, which caused terrible suffering. The export of British goods also suffered

* There is a good Life of Lincoln by Lord Charnwood.

seriously ; but a huge smuggling trade grew up through the West Indies. For these reasons the war put a serious strain upon the relations between Britain and the federal government. In general, British feeling was strongly on the side of the Union, because the hatred of slavery had become very deep in the British people. But the sentiment of the governing class—including Gladstone—was on the side of the Seceders ; and it was these views which were mostly transmitted to America. The Federal government—forgetting how it had fought for the rights of neutrals in the war of 1812—was very severe on neutral trade with the southern States : British ships bound for the West Indies were seized at sea on the ground that their " ultimate destination " was a southern port ; and although this was doubtless true, it represented a great extension of interference with neutral trade. A Federal ship even seized two southern envoys on their way to Britain in a British ship, and this episode nearly led to a breach. Finally, the Confederates, finding it difficult to send out privateers from their own ports, imitated Napoleon, who had had many privateers built in America, and gave commissions for the construction of commerce-raiders to British shipyards. The British Government stopped most of these. But four of them escaped, and among these was the notorious *Alabama*, which escaped from Liverpool just before the order for its arrest came down, and did an immense amount of damage to the commerce of the northern States.

The *Alabama*.—All these things put a severe strain upon the relations between Britain and the United States. When the war was over, the United States claimed compensation for all the damage done by the *Alabama*. There was no precedent for such a claim. But after long discussion, it was agreed to refer the matter to arbitration. The arbitration went against Britain (1871). Although the American claims were enormously cut down, the balance was so large that the American treasury never succeeded in spending it all.

The Danish War.—Before the American Civil War had come to an end, a new trouble had broken out in Europe, over the right of the Danish crown to the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. The question is too complex to be discussed here. It concerns us only as an illustration of Palmerston's diplomacy. Palmerston's sympathies were strongly on the side of the Danes, and he and his Foreign Secretary, Lord Russell, expressed them so frankly that the Danes were encouraged by the expectation of British support to resist the com-

bined attack of Prussia and Austria. In this instance, however, Palmerston had to deal with a new Power with whom words and threats counted for little. Bismarck, the chief minister of Prussia, had designed the Danish war as a first step towards the unification of Germany under Prussian control. He believed in "blood and iron"; and nothing that Palmerston could have said or done would have influenced his plans. The Danes had to be left to suffer; * and the prestige of Britain, which Palmerston valued so highly, suffered also.

Death of Palmerston.—This was the last important event in the brilliant career of the man who had played so great a part in European affairs for thirty-five years; and it was a proof that the era in which his methods were effective was coming to an end. He died in 1865, and his death was the end of an era in European as well as in British politics. In the following year, 1866, came yet another event in which his spirited and dictatorial methods would have been quite unavailing: Prussia turned upon Austria, and broke her power at Sadowa; and by doing so secured for herself the mastery of Germany.

CHAPTER XLV

DISRAELI AND GLADSTONE (1865–1880)

1. A Political Awakening (1865–1868)

The period of quiescence in British politics came to an end with the death of Palmerston. In Parliament the strife of parties revived, and the powerful and sharply contrasted personalities of Gladstone and Disraeli filled the public eye. But, besides this, difficult problems presented themselves, which would in any case have brought a new interest into public affairs.

The Fenians in Ireland.—The eternal Irish question demanded attention in a new form. No attempt had yet been made to grapple with the causes of Irish misery. The population of Ireland was steadily dwindling, and the condition of the peasantry was still wretched. The innumerable emigrants who had flocked

* For the campaign, see the larger Atlas, Plate 72*f*.

to America since 1846 carried with them a bitter hatred of Britain, and some of them now began to make plans for using the wealth they had acquired in the New World to overthrow the British power over Ireland. Revolutionary conspiracies, fomented and supported from America, gave a new aspect to the Irish problem. In 1858 a body called the Fenian Brotherhood had been founded in America. When the Civil War was over (1865), many men trained to arms were available, and the plans of revolution began to be seriously undertaken. In 1866 informers put the British Government on the track of these preparations: stores of arms were discovered in Ireland; and *Habeas Corpus* was suspended. Nevertheless, there were several little outbreaks by Irish-Americans in Ireland, and 1,200 Irish-Americans made a raid into Canada, to deal with which the Canadian volunteers had to be called out. In 1867 the Fenians resolved to "carry the war into England." They tried to seize Chester Castle. An attempt was made to blow up Clerkenwell Gaol, and twelve people lost their lives in the explosion. In Manchester a gang of Fenians, trying to release two of their comrades who had been arrested, murdered a police sergeant. Three of them were hanged. They were dubbed "the Manchester martyrs." These alarming outrages received no support from the Irish priesthood, and scarcely any from the peasantry. They were entirely due to Irish-American Fenians. But they were a danger-signal. They deeply impressed the mind of Gladstone, who was convinced that drastic measures must be taken to remove the evils which produced such terrible fruits. The Irish question dominated him for the rest of his life.

Trade Union Problems.—In the same years Trade Unionism in England was coming to a crisis of its history. The great national trade unions had been growing steadily in strength, and had done much, by rational negotiation, to improve the condition of their members. But the great majority of trade unions were still little local organisations, which lacked the competent guidance of the big national bodies. In some cases they exercised a cruel tyranny over non-unionists. In 1867 it was proved that for some years a positive reign of terror had existed among the cutlery-workers of Sheffield, where workmen's tools were stolen, houses were blown up, and deliberate murders were committed. Some sections of public opinion were inclined to regard these revelations as a condemnation of the whole system of trade unionism. But they concerned only a few of the unions; they were largely due to the character of secret

conspiracy which the law had imposed upon the trade union movement, and they were condemned by nobody more vehemently than by the well-organised unions which knew that their usefulness was impaired by such actions. At the same time the position of the trade unions was endangered in other ways. During a tailors' strike in London a number of trade unionists were found guilty of criminal conspiracy for trying to persuade men not to work for the employers, and the judge laid it down that any trade union, being in restraint of trade, was a criminal conspiracy. Again, when a trade union official embezzled the funds of his union, the courts found that no action would lie against him, because the union itself existed for an illegal purpose. If this view of the law held good, the trade union movement would be reduced to impotence, and the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824 and 1825 might as well never have been carried. The law would have to be altered. This conviction led trade unionists to take a new interest in the question of parliamentary reform, to which they had hitherto been indifferent. It accounts for the sudden rise of enthusiasm for this question: hitherto every attempt of Russell, Bright and Disraeli to deal with it had been balked by public indifference.

A Liberal Reform Bill. — After Palmerston's death the Liberal ministry was reconstituted under Russell (now Earl Russell) with Gladstone as leader in the House of Commons. They promptly introduced a new Reform Bill. It was a modest measure. But the Palmerstonian temper was still so strong that its introduction aroused keen opposition among some of the more conservative Liberals, led by Robert Lowe, a brilliant speaker who had seen democracy at work in Australia, and did not like it: John Bright called these malcontents "the Cave of Adullam." The debate aroused intense public interest, such as had not been seen since the collapse of Chartism: there were processions and mass meetings, and when the authorities tried to prevent a meeting in Hyde Park, fifty yards of railings were pushed down by a good-humoured crowd.

Disraeli's Reform Act. — Supported by the "Cave of Adullam," the Conservatives voted down the Government, which resigned. For the third time Lord Derby and Disraeli formed a Conservative ministry (1866). It lasted for eighteen months. Its chief work was the passage of the *Reform Act* of 1867. Having defeated the Liberal ministry on the question of parliamentary reform, Disraeli promptly proceeded to introduce a Reform Bill of

his own. He recognised that the change must come ; he disliked the middle class, who had wielded power since 1832, and believed that his ideas would have a better chance of acceptance in the artisan class, whom he proposed to enfranchise ; and he was anxious that the inevitable concession should be made by his own party. In its original form the scheme was surrounded by safeguards, in the form of extra votes for property and educational qualifications. But these were swept away, mainly by the pressure of the opposition. In the end the Bill conferred the vote upon all householders in towns, and also upon lodgers ; while in the country every occupier of a tenement worth £12 per annum was enfranchised. This change, which was a long step towards complete democracy, was regarded with deep misgivings by many Conservatives. Lord Derby described it as "a leap in the dark" ; Lord Cranborne (later Lord Salisbury) denounced it as "a political betrayal which has no parallel in our annals."

The New Democracy.—Disraeli, who had been engaged for thirty years in "educating his party," had, in fact, committed them to the experiment of Tory democracy. Subsequent events showed that his calculations were justified. In the thirty-four years from 1832 to 1867 the Conservative party had held office for only seven and a half years. In the next thirty-four years, down to the death of Queen Victoria, the Conservative party held office for nineteen and a half years. Moreover, the new electorate brought about one marked change in the British political system. Instead of the very narrow majorities which had been usual ever since 1846, successive elections from 1868 onwards gave sweeping majorities to one side or the other : the "swing of the pendulum" became more violent. This was because, in a larger electorate, the number of voters not pledged to either of the great parties was larger, and though they were still a small proportion of the total, they could turn many elections. This wavering body became the real governing power in English politics, and politicians inevitably strove to appeal to it. Consequently public meetings and other forms of popular appeal became more and more important ; the machinery of party organisation was gradually brought to a high pitch of efficiency ; and the actual proceedings of Parliament became relatively less important than they had been.

2. Gladstone's First Government (1868–1874)

Disraeli and Gladstone.—The new era of British politics which now began was dominated by the two powerful personalities of Disraeli * and Gladstone. Both had become the leaders of their respective parties by 1868, Lord Derby having retired and left the office of Prime Minister to Disraeli, while Lord Russell almost at the same moment withdrew from the Liberal leadership, in which he was succeeded by Gladstone. The two men were nearly of an age; in 1868 Disraeli was sixty-three and Gladstone fifty-nine. Both had given up their lives to politics, and had sat in parliament continuously since the first Reformed Parliament. Both disliked the tepid temper of Whiggism. Disraeli, having begun as a Radical, had been led by his Jewish sense of the importance of race to attempt the task of educating the gentlemen of England into Tory democracy; Gladstone, having begun as a true-blue Tory, had followed his master Peel into a Liberalism that became more and more unflinching. Neither knew what it was to be timid or half-hearted. Both were distrusted by the more stolid and orthodox members of their parties. Both had strong intellectual interests outside politics, Disraeli being a brilliant novelist in the brocaded style, while Gladstone had an immense range of knowledge, and made elaborate studies of Homer, Dante and Butler. But their differences were far deeper than their resemblances. Disraeli was a mysterious, sphinx-like, impassive figure, with a gift of sardonic phrase, a humorous detachment which enabled him to take large views, and an Oriental delight in splendour. This made him an imperialist, but it was in the dominion of the East that he took delight, rather than in the new lands of the colonies, of which he had once said (in 1852) that they were "millstones round our neck." He had also a vision of England led back out of the ugliness of industrialism into happiness under the leadership of an imaginative aristocracy. Gladstone, on the other hand, was a man of intense religious fervour. He could be completely captured by an idea or a cause, and when this happened, nothing could daunt or deter him. He combined extraordinary gifts of majestic eloquence with a subtlety of mind which his enemies described as Jesuitical.

* There is a short Life of Disraeli by J. A. Froude, and a very entertaining one by the French writer, André Maurois. There is an essay on Disraeli by F. J. C. Hearnshaw in *English Prime Ministers of the 19th Century*.

Like his master Peel, he did not look far ahead, or form mental visions of an ideal state of society. But he passionately believed in liberty, and threw himself with intense earnestness into each new reform that seemed to him to be needed. No two men could have been more different. They deeply distrusted one another. Disraeli thought Gladstone a sophisticated windbag, and Gladstone thought Disraeli an insincere trifler. They appealed to different elements in the national mind. Gladstone brought the spirit of religion into politics, and Disraeli the spirit of romance.

Gladstone's First Ministry.—The election of 1868, under the new Franchise Act, returned a large Liberal majority, and Gladstone formed his first ministry. It showed a greater activity in constructive legislation and in administrative reform than any Government since 1834.

Irish Disestablishment.—Gladstone's own attention was concentrated upon Ireland, where he was resolved to redress what seemed to him the three main evils—the exclusive privileges of the Anglican Church, to which only one-twelfth of the population belonged ; the land system, which left the impoverished tenants at the mercy of their landlords ; and the exclusion of Catholics from the opportunities of university education. The first was dealt with by an Act for the disestablishment of the Irish Church (1869), which aroused fierce opposition among English Churchmen and in the House of Lords. It was only carried after substantial concessions had been made. The Act not only deprived the Anglican Church in Ireland of its exclusive privileges, it also took from it all endowments earlier in date than 1660, on the ground that these had not been meant for the maintenance of a minority Church. The wealth thus withdrawn was used for the relief of distress. Although it thus lost nearly half of its capital wealth, the English Church of Ireland soon found that it was strengthened rather than weakened by the change.

Irish Land Act.—The Irish Land Act (1870) was designed to protect the tenant against unfair eviction, which had been the chief cause of recent disturbances. No tenant was to be evicted so long as he paid his rent, and he was to be entitled to compensation for improvements which he had made. But the Act did not put an end to agrarian troubles, because rents were far too high, and no means of reducing them were provided. Agrarian outrages became even worse than before ; Coercion Acts had to be maintained ; and in

1871 a band of Irish-American "Ribbonmen," as they called themselves, created such a reign of terror in Westmeath that a special Act had to be passed to deal with the situation. Something more drastic than the Land Act of 1870 was needed. Nevertheless it was the first serious attempt to deal with the Irish land problem, and the first definite interference with the rights of landlords. In a third Act Gladstone tried to deal with the university problem, but his proposals pleased nobody, and had to be withdrawn.

A National System of Education.—The most important measure of this Government was the Education Act of 1870, which for the first time established a universal system of elementary education. This was one of the most important social reforms of the century. Only about half the children of the country received any education at all before this Act was passed; and many of the existing schools were totally inadequate for their work. The Act provided that in every district where there was insufficient school accommodation a School Board should be set up, with the duty of filling the gap, partly at the cost of the rates, partly with the aid of grants from the Treasury. But a bitter controversy sprang up on the question whether religious instruction should be given in these new public schools, and if so, of what kind. After much controversy, this question was settled by a compromise—"undenominational" religious teaching should be given. But this satisfied nobody, although it worked well enough; both Churchmen and Dissenters were alienated, and (as often happens) the Government was weakened by its most valuable achievement.

Army Reform.—Ever since the Crimean War it had been evident that a drastic reform of the Army was needed. It was carried out by Cardwell, the Secretary of State for War in this Government. He set himself to create a military system suitable for the needs of the British Empire, which requires an efficient force ready to be despatched to any part of the world, and capable of easy expansion. For this purpose he devised a system of short-term service, followed by a period in the reserve, in place of the old system of long-term service. He also assigned a fixed area of recruitment to each regiment, and linked up the militia and volunteers with the regular battalions in an orderly system. Finally, in 1871, he abolished the old abuse whereby commissions in the Army were purchased, and were thus limited to the wealthy. This was an attack upon the last stronghold of aristocratic privilege. There was vehement opposition to all

these reforms, but especially to the abolition of purchase, which was only effected by the use of the queen's prerogative because the House of Lords would have thrown it out.

Other Reforms.—Not less important than these great reforms were certain others which were necessitated by the growth of democracy, though they were fiercely opposed. The universities of Oxford and Cambridge were for the first time thrown open fully to Dissenters and Roman Catholics by the abolition of religious tests (1871). The system of nomination to positions in the Civil Service was abolished everywhere save in the Foreign Office, and open competitive examinations were established in its place (1870). The Ballot Act (1872) introduced secret voting, and thus put an end to intimidation. A new department of government, known as the Local Government Board (the predecessor of the modern Ministry of Health) was set up to look after the administration of the poor law, the organisation of measures for public health, and, in general, the rapidly growing activities of the local authorities. An attempt was made to deal with the social evil of excessive drinking by a Licensing Bill, which proposed a systematic reduction in the number of public-houses wherever they were excessive, and allowed ten years' grace to the publicans in lieu of compensation; but the brewers and the temperance enthusiasts combined to defeat these proposals, which greatly added to the unpopularity of the Government.

Legal Reform.—A far-reaching reform of the whole system of justice was also set on foot, whereby the old, complex and overlapping organisation of the law-courts was systematically recast. This reform was not completed until after the Government had fallen, but it was one of the most valuable of its achievements.

Trade Unions Legalised.—Finally, the trade union problem was tackled. In the Trade Union Act of 1871 the trade unions were for the first time recognised as legal bodies. An attempt was also made to distinguish between legal and illegal "picketing," but the definition was interpreted by the law-courts in such a way that it gave no real protection to legitimate trade union activities, and a new Act had to be passed for this purpose in 1875. The result of these Acts was a very rapid growth in the strength of trade unionism.

Decline of the Government.—There was a marked contrast between the strenuous reforming activity of this ministry and the placid inaction of the previous period. It aroused intense public interest and keen controversy. But too many interests had been

attacked, and for this reason the popularity of the Government rapidly declined. Churchmen were alienated by Irish disestablishment and the opening of the universities; neither Churchmen nor Dissenters were satisfied with the Education Act; landlords were alarmed by the Irish Land Act; publicans and temperance enthusiasts were equally angered by the Licensing Bill; the whole officer class was outraged by army reform; and even trade unionists were dissatisfied with the Trade Union Act. And the foreign policy of the Government did nothing to restore its popularity. It was pacific and unexciting, and lacked the flamboyant assertion of British prestige which had made Palmerston popular.

The Franco-German War.—Three questions of importance in foreign affairs emerged during these years. One was the advance of Russia in Central Asia, which in 1869 reached the borders of Afghanistan. Instead of taking any military measures, the Government came to an agreement with Russia, whereby both powers undertook to respect the independence of Afghanistan. The second question arose from the outbreak of war between France and Prussia in 1870, which led to a crushing Prussian victory and the formation of the German Empire, now obviously the greatest and most menacing power in Europe. The Government tried to mediate between the rivals, but the attempt was hopeless, because both (and especially Germany) were determined to go to war. On one point, however, a real diplomatic victory was secured. One or other of the belligerents might be tempted to cross the frontier of Belgium. But the neutrality of Belgium was secured by treaties of 1832 and 1839, guaranteed by Britain among other Powers. Gladstone and his Foreign Secretary, Lord Granville, made Belgium's neutrality safe by negotiating identical treaties with both France and Prussia, whereby Britain undertook, if either party violated the neutrality of Belgium, to join forces with the other. By this arrangement Britain completely safeguarded the neutrality of Belgium; but she obviously was not playing the masterful part which she had seemed to play under Palmerston.

Alabama Arbitration.—Finally, in 1872, after long delays, the *Alabama* case was brought to arbitration; and when the arbitration went against Britain, the Government accepted the decision and paid the heavy damages awarded. This was the greatest victory which had yet been won for the method of arbitration. It was a landmark in the movement towards organised peace. But it could

be, and was, represented as a mean-spirited surrender of British rights.

Defeat of Gladstone.—Thus, reforming activity at home and a pacific attitude abroad combined to alienate the electorate. When Parliament was dissolved in 1874 the voting went heavily against the Liberals; and Disraeli, after his long patience, found himself at last not merely in office but in power, with a very large majority, able to carry out his ideas.

3. Disraeli's Administration (1874–1880)

The Home Rule Party.—The new Parliament of 1874 contained two new elements. One consisted of two trade union members, whose expenses had been paid by their unions. They voted as Liberals, but they were the forerunners of the future Labour Party. The other was the appearance of fifty-eight Irish members who for the first time refused to associate themselves with either of the older political parties, but called themselves Home Rulers, and made it their aim to break down the English parliamentary system as a means to securing legislative independence for Ireland. Among them was Charles Stewart Parnell,* a Protestant landlord, but a fervid hater of the English ascendancy. Throughout this Parliament, but especially in its later years, they set themselves with skill and assiduity to obstruct public business, especially on Irish questions. These new tactics at first seemed only vexatious. In the next Parliament they were to become alarming.

Social Reform.—In the first years of the new Parliament Disraeli had an opportunity of showing what he meant by the new Toryism which he had been preaching since the days of "Young England" in the 'forties. It was expressed in a series of useful measures introduced by the Home Secretary, Richard Cross. One was a Trade Union Act (1875), which remedied the defects of the Act of 1871 by declaring that an act which would be legal if done by one man should not be illegal if done by two or more; this Act also made peaceful picketing legal. A second Act (1875) empowered municipalities to acquire insanitary property, demolish it, and construct workmen's dwellings, if need be at the cost of the rates. This was the modest beginning of public attention to the housing of the people, though many municipalities had already

* There is a short Life of Parnell by R. Barry O'Brien.

obtained similar powers by private Acts. Two further Acts were useful codifications of previous legislation on social questions, one dealing with the numerous Public Health Acts which had been passed since 1848, while the other codified and simplified the provisions of the numerous Factory Acts since 1833. All this was useful work, though it scarcely fulfilled the vague hopes of social reconstruction of the Young England days.

Imperial Activities. — Disraeli's main interest now lay, indeed, not in domestic but in imperial and foreign affairs, and he did much to stimulate that pride in empire which was to become so strong during the next generation. In 1875, by a dramatic stroke, he purchased from the almost bankrupt Khedive of Egypt his shares in the Suez Canal, which had been opened in 1869; and thus secured to Britain a voice in the control of that vital waterway to India. It was on his advice that the queen assumed in 1877 the title of Empress of India; and a splendid Durbar was summoned to give the Indian princes an opportunity of doing homage. His Government encouraged a vigorous and assertive policy in various parts of the world. Thus a strong effort was made to bring about the federation of South Africa; the Transvaal was annexed, against the wishes of its inhabitants, who soon broke into revolt; and the disastrous Zulu war was fought in 1879. Again, the cautious attitude of the Gladstone Government in regard to Afghanistan was abandoned; in view of the advance of Russia in Asia, Afghanistan was invaded, and the second Afghan War was undertaken, which almost led to a disaster as great as that of 1842. These events will be dealt with in their own place (pp. 614 ff.); but they were signs of the imperial spirit which Disraeli did so much to cultivate.

The Eastern Question. — The most important events of Disraeli's Government were connected with the Eastern Question, on which he took up once more the old attitude of Palmerston, and found himself in acute conflict with Gladstone. All the promises of reform which the Sultan had made at the time of the Crimean War had come to nothing, and the misgovernment of Turkey's Christian subjects was if anything worse than it had been. In 1875 the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina broke into revolt, and the semi-independent princes of Serbia and Montenegro went to their aid.* These events attracted the attention of the Powers, as joint

* For the Eastern Question, see School Atlas, Plate 26*c*, and the larger Atlas, Plate 86.

guardians of Turkey, and long conferences were held, which came to no conclusion. While the Powers argued, revolt broke out in Bulgaria, and was suppressed by the Turks with atrocious savagery. When the news of the Bulgarian atrocities reached Europe, Gladstone broke out into fierce denunciations of the Turk, and demanded that he should be cleared "bag and baggage" out of Europe.

Russo-Turkish War.—This would have involved a total reversal of the traditional British policy. Disraeli, like Palmerston, feared any weakening of Turkish sovereignty, lest Russia should be strengthened, and was anxious to prevent military action, especially by Russia. In 1877 Russia, refusing to wait any longer for the joint action of the Powers, declared war against Turkey, and (after some initial checks) beat down the Turkish resistance and marched almost to the gates of Constantinople. Thereupon Disraeli's Government asked Parliament for war-credits, sent a fleet to the Sea of Marmora, and brought Indian troops to Malta. War seemed to be near. War-fever was high in England; and the popular song of the moment, with which the music-halls rang, declared that "we don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do, we've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too." Gladstone denounced these preparations, and a substantial part of the nation, stirred by the tales of Turkish atrocities, took his view, though the majority was certainly against him.

San Stefano and Berlin.—The outbreak of war was averted because Turkey submitted to the terms dictated by Russia in the Treaty of San Stefano. This treaty would have turned the greater part of the Balkan peninsula into a series of independent Christian States, of which the greatest would have been Bulgaria, while Turkey would have been left with very little beyond Constantinople. In other words, the results of the later Balkan wars would have been anticipated. Disraeli, fearing that these new States would be vassals of Russia, demanded that the terms of the treaty should be submitted to revision by the Powers of Europe; Russia reluctantly agreed, and a Congress was summoned at Berlin (1878). Before the Congress met, however, Disraeli concluded secret agreements with both Russia and Turkey. The agreement with Russia practically defined the terms subsequently reached at Berlin. By the agreement with Turkey Britain guaranteed the Turkish possessions in Asia, and, in return, received the island of Cyprus on payment of an annual tribute.

The result was that the Congress of Berlin was a triumph for Disraeli. The terms of San Stefano were revised ; the new State of Bulgaria was greatly reduced in size ; and Turkey was left in control of a large part of the Balkan peninsula, including Macedonia, which was to be a constant source of discord.*

Criticism of Disraeli's Policy.—All these arrangements broke down within the next thirty-five years ; in the meanwhile they caused incessant unrest. They were, in fact, one of the deeper causes of the Great War of 1914. Lord Salisbury, who was Disraeli's colleague at Berlin, later said that in this business Britain had " put her money on the wrong horse." But at the moment it appeared that Russia's advance had been checked. Disraeli was able to return in triumph, claiming that he had brought back " peace with honour," and if he had gone to the country at that moment he would certainly have returned with a great majority. Gladstone, however, never ceased to denounce all these transactions, although public opinion was against him ; the mob of London smashed his windows, and his own colleagues deprecated his vehemence. As the war fever died down, the body of opinion to which he was able to appeal gained in strength. The disasters of Afghanistan and Zululand seemed to support his denunciations ; and by 1880 Disraeli's popularity had so much waned that in the election of that year the Liberals were returned with a large majority.

The End of an Era.—The election of 1880 brought to an end the long rivalry between Disraeli and Gladstone ; for Disraeli (who had for some years sat in the House of Lords as Earl of Beaconsfield) died in 1881. It was significant that their rivalry had ended with a debate upon the principles of foreign policy ; for in 1880 a new period in the relations between Britain and the other Western nations was opening. The long monopoly of oversea power which Britain had enjoyed since 1815 was coming to an end, and a period of fierce rivalry for world-power was beginning ; in the end it was to lead to the Great War of 1914.

The Progress of Science.—While the political situation had been changing, another revolution, vastly more profound, had silently taken place. Not England only, but the whole world, had passed into the Age of Science, in which men's ideas about man's place in the universe have been transformed ; and in which,

* For Europe after the Berlin Congress, see the larger Atlas, Plate 85.

also, men have obtained a growing command over the forces of Nature which has already transformed, and will increasingly transform, the conditions of our life. It was the patient work of scholars in their laboratories, carried on unrestingly while the politicians were waging their battles in Parliament and on the platform, which had brought about this revolution. Many of the greatest men of science of the century were British, but the work of scientific exploration was international, and its results were shared by all peoples. We cannot here give any account of all this work. The Astronomers had revealed the vastness of the universe, and made this earth appear but an insignificant pin-point in space. The Geologists had pushed back the history of the earth into the æons of the past, and shown that the whole story of man was but a brief and late episode in that immense history. The Biologists had shown how the forms and species of plants and animals had gradually developed, and how man was the descendant and the kin of the beasts that perish. The microscope had displayed the infinitely little, as the telescope and the spectroscope explored and tried to measure the infinitely great; and had shown (especially in the work of Pasteur) how the life of man depends upon invisible micro-organisms, which maintain his life or take it away. The Chemists had penetrated deeply into the mysteries of the composition of matter, and shown how this knowledge could be used to give man power over his environment. The Physicists were pushing further and further the analysis of the forces at work about us, and they too were placing potent and dangerous weapons in the hands of man.

The Darwinian Controversy.—It was but slowly that the mass of ordinary men realised the significance of these astounding revelations, in comparison with which the change of ideas that came in the sixteenth century was a small matter. In Britain, especially, the governing class was out of touch with all this movement, for its schools and its universities long continued to despise this revolutionary "New Learning." The first shock came with the controversy that raged round the work of the biologist Charles Darwin; his famous book, *The Origin of Species*, which set forth the doctrine of Evolution, and traced the descent (or ascent) of man from the animals, was published in 1859. The storm of discussion which it raised was at its height about 1865. From about that time the new ideas about man's place in the universe ceased to be confined to

scholars, and gradually coloured the thinking of all educated people. It also brought about a rapid change in the methods of many industries. By understanding the processes of Nature, man was obtaining a new power over them; and the progress of discovery and invention became bewilderingly swift.

Britain's Backwardness.—In this tremendous revolution, which transformed the conditions of life upon our planet within two generations, individual British scholars played a very great part; they included many of the greatest contributors to the scientific revolution which was taking place. But the British peoples were as yet ill-equipped to take advantage of the new knowledge; in comparison with other countries, and notably with Germany, their universities were too few, and too scornful of "the new learning," while they had as yet (except in Scotland) no adequate system of schools above the elementary grade. Their old endowed schools had largely become a preserve of the governing class, and were apt, with the universities, to be scornful of "the new learning." It would have been a very grave matter for the British peoples if they had not quickly mended their deficiencies in this respect, as they began to do in the next period, when new universities came into being, and a whole system of new schools was created. Even as it was, British trade suffered a good deal during the next generation from the country's backwardness in this field; and the supremacy in some of the new scientific industries largely passed to other countries, notably to Germany.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN 1880

1. Changing Conditions

End of the Era of Monopoly.—Since Waterloo the British peoples had enjoyed an extraordinary ascendancy in manufacture and commerce, and an almost complete monopoly of oversea dominion. This period of supremacy was now coming to an end. The European peoples had reached, for a time, the close of the long troubles which had engrossed their attention during the nineteenth century, and which had sprung from the struggles for national unity and

freedom, and for the institutions of self-government. Germany and Italy were now powerful and united States; France, after many revolutions, had in the bitterness of defeat at last succeeded in finding a system of government which was stable; every European country except Russia and Turkey had adopted the system of parliamentary government; and the United States, having overcome the long disputes about slavery which had impeded her development, and having opened up and settled the whole of her vast territory, was entering upon a period of unprecedented growth.

Trade Developments.—All the nations were now addressing themselves to the task of developing their industry and trade, and were beginning to aspire after dominion in the non-European world. The growth of industry in Germany, America, Belgium, and France had hitherto been slow.* These countries had largely been content to buy the products of the modern industry from Britain. There now began in all of them a period of fierce energy in industrial development, and a systematic application of science to industry, which made it necessary for British traders to overhaul their methods. In many fields, and especially in the more modern and scientific industries, the new competitors were more alert and more enterprising than their British rivals. Moreover, they could profit by British experience. They were not handicapped, in the same degree, by the ugly conditions which had grown up during the first period of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, and which could only be amended slowly and at great cost.

Protection v. Free Trade.—In the middle of the century it had seemed likely that, besides imitating other British methods, the newer industrial countries would also imitate her system of Free Trade. France had gone a long way in that direction when she accepted Cobden's commercial treaty of 1860, and until after the Franco-Prussian War Germany was almost a Free Trade country. But this expectation was disappointed. Both the European countries and the United States adopted the policy of building up their industries behind high tariffs, that is, making their people pay, in higher prices, for the creation of industries. Of course, by doing so, they restricted their export trade, because no country can export more goods than are paid for by its imports, and if it shuts out imports it must restrict its exports. This was why Britain did not adopt the same policy:

* For the growth of industrialism in Europe and the United States between 1860 and the present day, see the larger Atlas, Plate 90–91.

she depends upon export trade. And she still, for this reason, preserved her ascendancy in export trade. But the restriction of markets in which she had hitherto sold many of her goods, and the necessity of finding fresh outlets and developing new methods, placed difficulties in the way of British traders.

Trade Depression in Britain.—It was in the 'seventies that Britain first began to feel the effect of these new conditions, because the competition began to be keen after the Franco-Prussian War. The last years of Disraeli's Government were years of relatively bad trade, and many years passed before the level of 1875 was reached again. Agriculture also was suffering in these years. Its prosperity had not been affected by the repeal of the Corn Laws. But the cheap corn of the American middle west began to pour in in the 'seventies. In some countries, notably Denmark, the farmers took advantage of this by using cheap imported foodstuffs for their cattle, and thus developed a great dairy industry ; but the British farmer could not so easily adapt himself to the new conditions. British agriculture began to decay, and the decay has continued until this day. British industry was in no sense decaying ; as soon as it had adjusted itself to the new world-conditions, it obtained a greater prosperity than ever, because the wealth of the world was growing, and all nations had more to spend. British shipping, in particular, was in its golden age. The growth of trade all over the world meant that there were more goods for it to carry. The protectionist policy of other countries, whatever its effects upon their industry, was bad for their shipping, because their imports, and consequently also their exports, were restricted. Thus the mercantile marine of the United States, which had been a serious competitor of the British mercantile marine down to the 'sixties, shrank rapidly and soon ceased to be of much importance when America adopted a policy of high protection after the Civil War. Hence the position of Britain in the world was changing. She was no longer the one supreme manufacturing country, with a practical monopoly of the new mechanical processes ; she was only one of a number of competing industrial peoples ; she could only expect her share of the total trade of the world ; and the magnitude of that share must depend upon the skill and character of her people.

Imperialist Ambitions.—The European nations were about to show a similar eagerness to acquire oversea possessions. Their population was growing, and they did not want the surplus to go to

strengthen other countries. Their trade demanded raw materials, and they wanted control over some of the lands from which these raw materials came. They were beginning to measure the greatness of a State by the extent of its dominions, and the small States of Europe seemed to be dwarfed by the three gigantic empires of Britain, Russia, and the United States of America.

Hence there now began a rush for the control of the unoccupied regions of the earth, and huge colonial empires were rapidly built up during the generation following 1880. Britain also entered the competition, and added vast new territories to her already gigantic empire. Before we enter upon the story of this fevered period, which led up to the most terrible war in history, we must survey the British Empire as it was in 1880, and see what development it had undergone during the thirty placid and prosperous years between the Great Exhibition and the death of Disraeli.

2. India

Economic Development.—Between the Mutiny (1858) and the outbreak of the second Afghan War (1879) India enjoyed twenty years of unbroken peace, during which the introduction of Western methods was rapidly carried on. A railway system, built by British capital, was carried over the whole country. Large works of irrigation were constructed, bringing under cultivation areas which had yielded few or no crops. Trade increased rapidly, and India became the best customer for British goods. Population also increased. But the growth of population presented serious problems. India has always been liable to famines, when the monsoons failed. There were very severe famines in this period, in 1861, 1865, and 1876, and the Government was forced to take up seriously the problem of famine relief. In the old days little could be done. Each district grew only sufficient food for its own needs; when famines came it was impossible to bring adequate supplies from elsewhere, and the people just had to die. This was one of the factors which had kept the growth of population in check. Now the fertile districts grew more than they needed for their own use, because they could export the surplus. The railways made transport easy. It was therefore possible to work out an efficient system of famine-relief, such as India had never known in the past. The foundations of this system were laid during the famines of 1865 and 1876. To-day, though an

Indian famine causes hardships, it does not cause wholesale deaths by starvation.

Western Education.—Yet more important than the introduction of the material civilisation of the West was the growth of Western education in India. In 1857 three universities were founded, at Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. Numerous schools were also established, with Government grants. The result was the creation of a considerable Western-educated, English-speaking class of Indians, scattered over every Indian province. All the lawyers, schoolmasters, minor government officials, and journalists belonged to this class. Using the English language, Bengalis and Marathas, Punjabis and Madrasis, were able to communicate with one another as never before. They also had a common body of ideas, drawn from the English books which they studied. Even more than the railways, the English language was drawing together the intellectual leaders of the Indian peoples, and making possible, what had never existed before, an Indian national movement. The growth of this movement was to be one of the features of the next period.

Baluchistan.—The interval of peace was interrupted by new troubles on the north-west frontier, due (like the first Afghan War) to the fear of Russian advance. Afghanistan was in a state of disturbance; Russia, by the conquest of Bokhara (1869) and Khiva (1873), had brought her empire to the Afghan borders.* The Amir of Afghanistan asked for British protection (1869); Gladstone's Government, unwilling to assume fresh responsibilities, refused it. The Amir then turned to Russia, and Russian envoys were at the Court of Kabul in 1876. Lord Lytton, whom Disraeli had sent out as Viceroy, thereupon declared a protectorate over Baluchistan, took control of the Bolan Pass, and established a military station at *Quetta*, from which a flank attack could be made on any force advancing through Afghanistan. †

Second Afghan War.—In 1878, when anti-Russian feeling in Britain was at its height, the Amir of Afghanistan received a Russian envoy and refused to admit a British envoy. War was thereupon declared. A triple advance on Kabul drove the Amir to flight. Afghanistan became a vassal State, with a British resident at Kabul, and the frontier was revised so as to secure to India the control of the passes. But, as in 1840, there was a revolt: the British

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

† See School Atlas, Plate 54.

resident was murdered, and the war had to be fought all over again. There was much difficult fighting. A British force was seriously defeated at *Maiwand* (1879) and shut into Kandahar. In order to relieve it, General Roberts had to make a march of 300 miles through hostile and difficult country. This brilliant achievement made the reputation of the most beloved of British soldiers. But it also showed how perilous was the occupation of such a country as Afghanistan. In 1880 Lytton's and Disraeli's forward policy was reversed. Afghanistan was left to itself. But the war had given to the Government of India the keys of the mountain wall which forms its defence on the north-west.

3. The Self-Governing Colonies

Withdrawal of Troops.—In all the self-governing colonies the quiet years from 1850 to 1880 formed a period of steady and rapid growth. The colonies were now fully self-governing. They no longer needed the nurturing hand of the mother-country, which had been so necessary in the earlier period. It was a sign of this that in 1862 Parliament resolved to withdraw all the garrisons which had been maintained in these colonies; they were all gone by 1873, and officers had been sent out to help Canada and Australia in organising their own system of defence.

Progress of Canada.—Canada, which had been stagnant and unprogressive in the period before she became self-governing, had made rapid progress since that date. Her population rose from 1½ millions in 1840 to nearly 4½ millions in 1881. A vast deal of work was done in opening out the country by means of railways, mainly financed by British capital. A new colony was organised on the Pacific coast in 1858 (British Columbia).* But it was separated from the other colonies by the vast expanse of the central plain, still controlled by the Hudson Bay Company; it was jealous of admitting immigrants. In all this wide region there was only one small settlement, that of Red River (Manitoba); it had been founded as early as 1811. The trade relations of the various separate colonies were rather with the United States than with one another or the mother-country, and many feared that unless they could be more closely welded together, they would be absorbed by their greater neighbour. The tradition of the United Empire

* See School Atlas, Plate 51.

Loyalists was too strong to make this an attractive prospect. Moreover, friction had begun to grow again between the French and English in Upper and Lower Canada, which had been united in 1840. This would be avoided if each race could have its own legislature, but nobody wanted to separate them completely.

Canadian Federation.—All these reasons led to a movement for the federation of all the Canadian colonies, which was agreed upon under the leadership of Sir John Macdonald, and embodied in the British North America Act, passed through the British Parliament in 1867. This Act separated Ontario from Quebec, but it also united all the colonies as "the Dominion of Canada" under a single federal government; the various colonies becoming "provinces" with local legislatures of their own. Warned by the American Civil War, the framers of the Canadian constitution avoided the American model, and definitely subordinated the provinces to the central government. Instead of giving limited powers to the central government, and all other powers to the States (as in America), it gave limited powers to the provinces and all other powers to the central government.

Annexation of the North-West.—Two years later (1869), with the aid of the British Government, the Hudson Bay Company was bought out, and the vast central plain passed under the control of the Dominion. This change, however, caused a rebellion among the half-breed trappers of the Red River district. Led by Louis Riel, and with some help from across the American border, they seem to have aimed at founding a French-Catholic State. British troops had to be sent out under Sir Garnet Wolseley before the rebellion was crushed. Then the province of *Manitoba* was organised (1870); and the general maintenance of order throughout the vast area of the north-west was entrusted to a magnificent corps, organised in 1874, under the name of the North-West Mounted Police.

Railway Construction.—In order to weld the new federation together, great railway works had to be undertaken. The Intercolonial Railway, linking Canada proper with the maritime provinces, was completed in 1876. The greater task of linking east with west was longer delayed, though British Columbia only came into the federation (1871) on condition that a transcontinental line was built. This line, the famous Canadian Pacific Railway, was not begun until 1881. But already in 1880 the Canadian group of colonies had been united into a single free nation, controlling half

a continent. This was just a century after the failure to bring about a similar union had led to the unhappy breach between Britain and the thirteen American colonies.

Progress of Australia.—In Australia the progress made in these quiet years was even more remarkable : the population of the Australian group of colonies rose from less than half a million in 1850 to over 2½ millions in 1881. This was mainly due to the discovery, in 1851 and the following years, of rich deposits of gold, which brought a sudden inrush of gold-diggers. And, since the diggers

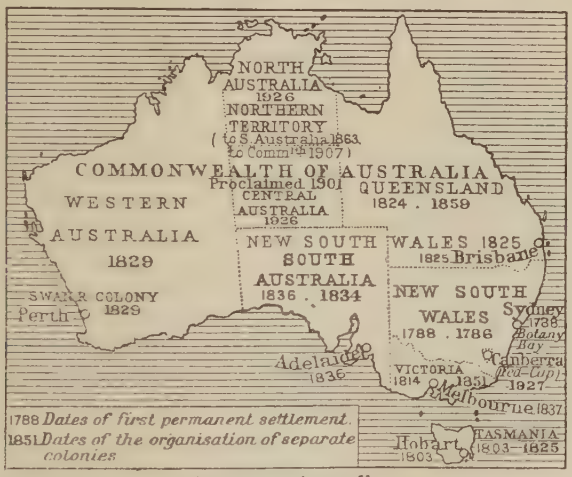


FIG. 41.—Australia.

had to be fed, it also led to a great increase of cultivation. The chief gold-fields were in Victoria, which multiplied its population tenfold in twenty years ; but there were others in New South Wales and Queensland, which became a separate colony in 1859.* Alongside of this increase of wealth and population went a rapid development of railways, whereby the country was opened up. This was also the heroic age of Australian exploration, when Burke and Wills, Stuart, Forrest and others mapped out the great desert heart of the Continent. Australia was not without her troubles in this period. The gold-diggers were turbulent, and difficult to keep in order ; the bush-ranger also gave a good deal of trouble ; in some respects the

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*b*.

system of government worked badly, and some of the colonies were brought to the verge of bankruptcy by their reckless expenditure. But, with the exception of Western Australia, which made no progress until gold was discovered there in the 'nineties, the Australian colonies were in 1880 prosperous and rapidly advancing, and had justified their claim to the ownership of a continent.

The Maoris in New Zealand.—The progress of New Zealand was handicapped by troubles with the warlike Maoris of the North Island. For ten years, 1860 to 1871, there was incessant fighting, in which British troops as well as colonial volunteers had to be employed. The Maoris were gallant and chivalrous fighters. In the end terms of peace were arranged which have proved satisfactory ever since (1871). The main difficulty was the land question, which was settled on terms that securely reserved a sufficiency of land for the Maoris. A striking feature of the settlement was that four Maori representatives were admitted on equal terms to the colonial legislature.

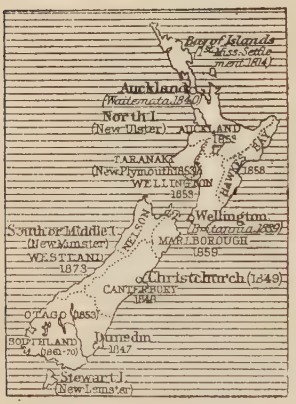


FIG. 42.—New Zealand.

Progress of New Zealand.—In spite of these difficulties New Zealand made steady progress, but the majority of the new settlers came to the South Island, out of reach of Maori troubles. In the twenty years from 1861 to 1881 the population rose from 100,000 to 500,000. The increase was mainly in the last ten years, during which both coal and gold were developed, and over 1,200 miles of railway were built. New Zealand was fairly launched upon her career as a free and self-governing State. Her growing unity was recognised by a change in the system of government. The little provincial assemblies of the isolated settlements which had been set up in 1856 were no longer needed; and in 1876 a single Parliament took control of the country's destinies.

Cape Colony and Natal.—South Africa was, as always, the most disturbed of the colonies. But even South Africa enjoyed a period of comparative peace after the conventions of 1852 and 1854, by which the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State had been recognised (p. 572). *Cape Colony* prospered steadily:

its white population multiplied threefold in the quarter of a century from 1850; Boers and British were friendly; the native population was peaceable; and in 1872 the colony was endowed, by Gladstone's Government, with the full system of responsible government. It is noteworthy that the franchise, on an educational qualification, was given to the natives. Cape Colony is the only part of South Africa in which this has ever been done. *Natal* had as yet few white settlers; they were vastly outnumbered by the natives; and they lived in some dread of their dangerous neighbours, the Zulus, who had built up again under their chief Cetywayo the formidable military power by which they had terrorised South Africa before they were defeated by the Boer trekkers (1837).

Diamonds and the Free State.—The *Orange Free State* passed through a troubled time in the first years after independence (1854), and had several wars with their native neighbours the Basutos. After 1864, however, they settled down under an able President, J. H. Brand; and in 1869 *Basutoland* was formally declared a British protectorate, and Basuto wars came to an end. In 1870, however, a difficulty arose between the British Government and the Orange Free State. Diamonds were discovered in 1868 on the western borders of the Free State, in the neighbourhood of the modern Kimberley. This brought an influx of undesirable immigrants, difficult to control. The diamond area was claimed both by the Free State and the native tribe of Griquas. The British Government, feeling that the policing of the diamond-diggers would be beyond the powers of a community of farmers, with the consent of the Griquas annexed Griqualand West, including the diamond area, and paid £90,000 to the Free State as compensation. This might well appear a high-handed act, and it poisoned relations with the Free State for some time.*

The Transvaal and the Zulus.—Finally, in the *Transvaal* the Boer settlers, who numbered only about 10,000, scattered over a vast area, were throughout this period in a condition of anarchy. At one moment they were divided into four republics, on bad terms with one another. They were also restless and adventurous, and constantly at issue with their native neighbours. Complaints of their behaviour came to the British Government from several of the native tribes, and from the missionaries: Livingstone complained

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*d*.

that they had raided the tribe among whom he was working, and burnt his house. It was feared that they would stir up serious native trouble. In particular they were on bad terms with Cetywayo and his Zulus, and had annexed territory which Cetywayo claimed. If a war with the Zulus broke out, all native Africa might be aflame.

Need for Federation.—It was clearly desirable that a common native policy should be pursued by South Africa as a whole. Sir George Grey had, as early as 1858, advocated a federation of the four white States. In 1876 Lord Carnarvon, Disraeli's colonial secretary, took up this scheme, and tried to get the two British colonies and the two Boer States to agree. He also sent out Sir Bartle Frere, a very able Anglo-Indian, as High Commissioner, with instructions to carry out federation.

Annexation of the Transvaal.—Independently of Frere, Shepstone, the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal, who was very anxious about the Zulus, went up to the Transvaal, and, finding that some of the Boers were as anxious as himself, and that the republic was in a state of anarchy, declared the Transvaal annexed to the British Crown (1877), and promised that it would receive full powers of self-government under a scheme of federation. The annexation was at first quietly received; partly, perhaps, in expectation of the federation proposals, but mainly because Cetywayo and his Zulus were threatening. Nothing happened, however, about federation, and the promised system of self-government was delayed.

The Zulu War.—Cetywayo, on the other hand, became more and more menacing; and in 1879 war broke out. It was badly conducted, and very damaging to British prestige in South Africa.* A disaster at *Isandhlwana* would have exposed Natal to the Zulu hordes, but for the valour with which *Rorke's Drift* was defended by a small force. Large reinforcements had to be brought up before the Zulu army was crushed at *Ulundi*, 1879, after which Cetywayo was deposed. The annexation of the Transvaal, and the incompetence with which the Zulu War was conducted, led directly to the revolt of the Transvaal Boers (1880), which was the beginning of twenty years of trouble in South Africa that filled the next period.

4. The West Indies, West Africa, and the Pacific

Effects of the Abolition of Slavery.—The older tropical colonies of Britain, in the West Indies and West Africa, had fallen

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*e*.

on evil days during the nineteenth century. Their prosperity had depended on slavery : slaves grew the sugar and tobacco of the West Indies ; and it was the inhuman traffic in slaves for the West Indian plantations that brought riches to the trading stations on the West African coast. The abolition of the slave trade in 1807 almost put an end to trade in West Africa for two generations ; and the abolition of slavery in 1833 brought ruin to the West Indies, because the emancipated negroes would not work, finding life very easy in that climate.

The West Indies.—After the middle of the nineteenth century, however, a revival began in the West Indies, largely owing to the coming of free labour from India, especially to Guiana and Trinidad. But the government of the lazy and illiterate negroes was not easy, especially as it rested in the hands of their one-time masters. In 1865 a dangerous rising broke out in a corner of Jamaica. Martial law was proclaimed, and the rising was put down promptly by the Governor, Mr. E. J. Eyre. But ugly deeds were perpetrated. A vehement controversy arose in England regarding the conduct of Governor Eyre, which became a party question.*

Abandonment of Self-Government.—The controversy led to an unexpected result. It was felt that the government of ex-slaves by their ex-masters was liable to lead to abuses. The planters themselves found the position invidious, while they hated the idea of admitting the negroes to civic rights. Accordingly, at the request of the planters themselves, the system of representative government, limited to white men, which had existed since the seventeenth century, was abolished in 1866, and Jamaica became a Crown Colony, ruled by a Governor responsible to Downing Street. Most of the other West Indian colonies followed suit. This might seem a retrograde step, but it seemed plain that representative institutions were inappropriate to countries in which there was a white aristocracy amid an overwhelmingly larger population of blacks, at any rate until the blacks were educated and more fully civilised. The principle thus established became a general rule throughout the British Empire : in the backward regions of the tropics self-government has been withheld, and the mother-country has retained control.

West Africa.—In West Africa there were three British colonies—Gambia, Sierra Leone, and a group of trading-stations on

* Carlyle wrote violently in favour of Governor Eyre (Latter-day Pamphlets).

the Gold Coast.* For a time, after the abolition of the slave trade, these stations were almost abandoned. But presently a new traffic in palm-oil arose; and there were a number of mission stations, which were doing good work among the native tribes of the hinterland. In 1843, therefore, Government resumed control, and established a protectorate over some of the tribes. A little later the Danish and Dutch Governments, finding that their forts on the Gold Coast were run at a loss, sold them to the British Government. The Dutch had been in the habit of paying tribute to the savage king of Ashanti. This tribute now ceased; the slave trade, on which he had thriven, had come to an end; and it was no longer safe for him to raid the coast tribes. In 1873 this savage potentate therefore attacked the Gold Coast colony. An expedition under Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent to deal with him; the Ashanti power was broken; the trade routes to the interior were thrown open; and the Gold Coast began to prosper. Meanwhile, in 1861, the island of *Lagos* had been occupied by the navy as a base for attack on the slave trade which was carried on in this region, and against which the British Navy waged incessant war. Lagos soon became also a valuable trade centre, being the outlet for the rich palm-bearing region of the Oil Rivers. Because of the growing commercial importance of palm-oil, the West Coast was again becoming valuable; and Britain held the predominant position in all this region. Her missionaries as well as her traders were everywhere; many native tribes petitioned to be taken under her protection. But the home Government refused all these requests, being unwilling to extend its obligations.

The Pacific Islands.—In very much the same way British influence had become preponderant in the Pacific. British traders and British missionaries visited all the islands. There were some French traders and missionaries also, and a few Germans. The French annexed the islands of Tahiti (1843) and New Caledonia (1853). Many islands petitioned to be taken under British protection, no doubt under the influence of the missionaries. In 1870 a conference of the Australasian colonies demanded that the home Government should declare a protectorate over most of the islands. But the home Government would not listen to these demands; it wanted no more territory.

Annexation of Fiji.—In 1871, however, its hand was forced.

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*c*.

Many traders, being subject to no control in the islands, were scandalously maltreating the natives, carrying them off in batches for forced labour, either in Australia or on the islands where sandalwood could be got. These iniquities were rousing hatred for the white man among the islanders. In 1871 the heroic missionary, Bishop Patteson, was murdered in one of the Santa Cruz islands in revenge for the misconduct of a trading vessel. This aroused strong feeling at home; and in 1872 Gladstone's Government passed an Act to regulate the Pacific trade, and to establish a High Commissioner, with powers to enforce these rules on all British subjects. But the High Commissioner had to have a headquarters. In 1874, therefore, the Fiji Islands were annexed, on the petition of their inhabitants, and became the centre of a vague protectorate over all the islands not annexed by other Powers. In the Pacific, as in West Africa, the British Empire went on growing despite all that the home Government could do to prevent it.

5. The Exploration of Tropical Africa

Africa was the first continent whose outline was revealed to Europe by the great explorations of the fifteenth century. It was the last continent to yield up the secrets of its interior. Down to 1850 very little was known of the Continent, beyond the coastal regions, and current maps were either empty, or filled with imaginary rivers and mountains. In the quarter of a century following 1850 all the main features of the Continent were revealed by a remarkable series of explorations, its immense riches were disclosed, and it lay ready to be exploited by the European powers.

David Livingstone.—The work of discovery was done by a host of explorers, British, French, and German.* But the most remarkable work was done by British explorers; this was natural, seeing that British traders and missionaries were more active than those of any other country in every part of the African coast. The greatest of them all was David Livingstone. † He was the son of Scottish working people, and had paid for his training as a missionary by working at the loom. In 1840 the London Missionary Society sent him to Kuruman, in Bechuanaland, far to the north of Cape

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 88.

† There is a short Life of Livingstone by Thomas Hughes (English Men of Action).

Colony. There he saw what savagery meant, and the degradation and cruelty which it involved. To open up Africa, and to bring to bear upon it the influence of Christianity and civilisation became the passion of his life. In 1849 he made his way to Lake Ngami and the great River Zambesi, with only such resources as a lonely missionary could command. In 1853 he explored the course of the

FIG. 43.—Livingstone's Explorations.

Zambesi, and crossed the continent from shore to shore. Between 1858 and 1864, under a commission from the British Government, he explored the Zambesi valley further, as well as Lake Nyasa, the southernmost of the great African lakes. In 1866 he set forth on the last and longest of his journeys, which ended with his death in 1873. During this journey he mapped out a great part of Western Africa, and the upper valley of the Congo. For courage and devotion, the single-handed achievements of this noble man have never been surpassed.

Other Explorations.—Other explorers were at work during the same years. Burton and Speke discovered the great lakes Tanganyika and Victoria ; Speke and Grant traced the course of the Nile ; Cameron crossed the continent from Zanzibar to Benguela ; a series of French and German explorers crossed and recrossed the Sahara. Finally, in 1874–1877, H. M. Stanley (who had previously found Livingstone) traced out the course of the mighty River Congo, and disclosed the enormous potential wealth of its valley. The interest of Europe in Africa had been growing as its secrets were revealed. Stanley's journey, which came when Europe had settled down after the Franco-Prussian War, brought this interest to a high pitch, and started the rush for territory in Africa which took place during the next twenty years.

Character of the Empire.—The British Empire as it was in 1880 was already the most gigantic collection of territories which had ever in the history of the world been brought under a single political system. It spread into every continent and was washed by every ocean. Its greater members were linked together by innumerable trading-posts and calling stations—Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Mauritius, Singapore, Hong-Kong, and many others. It included peoples of every grade of civilisation, and immeasurable natural resources. Naturally it was regarded with envy by the European nations, who were just beginning to desire external possessions.

Its Incoherence.—Yet the British people as yet attached comparatively little value to it. It had grown up almost by accident, mainly during the century since the loss of the American colonies. It was not held together by any rigid system of control, and most people in Britain vaguely assumed, at this date, that sooner or later its members would part company and become independent States. It was not held together by force, for the military forces of which Britain could dispose were very small. It was not, in the strict sense of the term, an " empire " at all, since its main features were complete self-government for its English-speaking members, and, in other regions, a recognition that it was the primary duty of the ruling power to think first of the interests of its native subjects, and to protect their rights and usages. These features had been due mainly to the work of the colonial enthusiasts of Wakefield's school, and to the work of the missionaries and their influence at home.

Growth of Imperial Sentiment.—In the years before 1880

a sense of pride in this extraordinary empire was beginning to grow up in Britain. One sign of it was the publication, in 1866, of an excellent book with the significant title of *Greater Britain*, by Charles Dilke, a young Radical who became a member of Gladstone's Government in 1880, and who was an intimate associate of Joseph Chamberlain, another fiery Radical of that day: Dilke and Chamberlain may be described as the heirs of the tradition of Wakefield, Durham, and the Radical Imperialists of the 'thirties. Another sign was the emphasis which Disraeli continually laid upon Britain's imperial interests. A third sign was the beginning of a demand for Imperial Federation, which started with W. E. Forster, the author of the Education Act of 1870. The imperial spirit was rising in Britain at the very moment when the desire for oversea possessions was beginning to capture the European peoples.

Supplementary Reading on Book VIII

The subject-matter of this Book is much more fully covered in Books IX and X of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* (Vol. II, pp. 297–598). Trevelyan's *History of England in the Nineteenth Century* is a good and readable short book; for fuller detail, refer to Marriott, *England in the Nineteenth Century*, or the two volumes of Longmans' *Political History*, by Brodrick and Fotheringham (1802–1837) and by Low and Sanders (1837–1902). Bagehot's *English Constitution* gives a classical description of the working of the British system during this period. For the contemporary history of Europe, which is very slightly touched upon in the text, there are many good summaries; perhaps the best is C. H. Hazen's *Europe since* 1815. On special aspects, Muir's *Nationalism and Internationalism*, *National Self-Government*, and *Expansion of Europe*. *English Prime Ministers in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, is a collection of useful but unequal essays by various hands. Book VII of the Piers Plowman Histories (by N. Niemeyer and E. H. Spalding) is useful for social and economic history. For details about India, V. A. Smith's *Oxford History of India*. Rice Holmes' *Indian Mutiny* is well worth reading if you have time, but it is a biggish book. On Canada, Grant's *Short History of Canada*; on Australia, Jenks' *History of Australia*; on New Zealand, Reeves' *Long White Cloud*; on South Africa, Theal's *South Africa* (Story of the Nations). Seeley's *Expansion of England* should be read not only as a good survey, but because it helped to create imperial sentiment.

BOOK IX

THE RIVALRY OF WORLD-POWERS AND THE RISE OF NEW SOCIAL AIMS

(1880-1914)

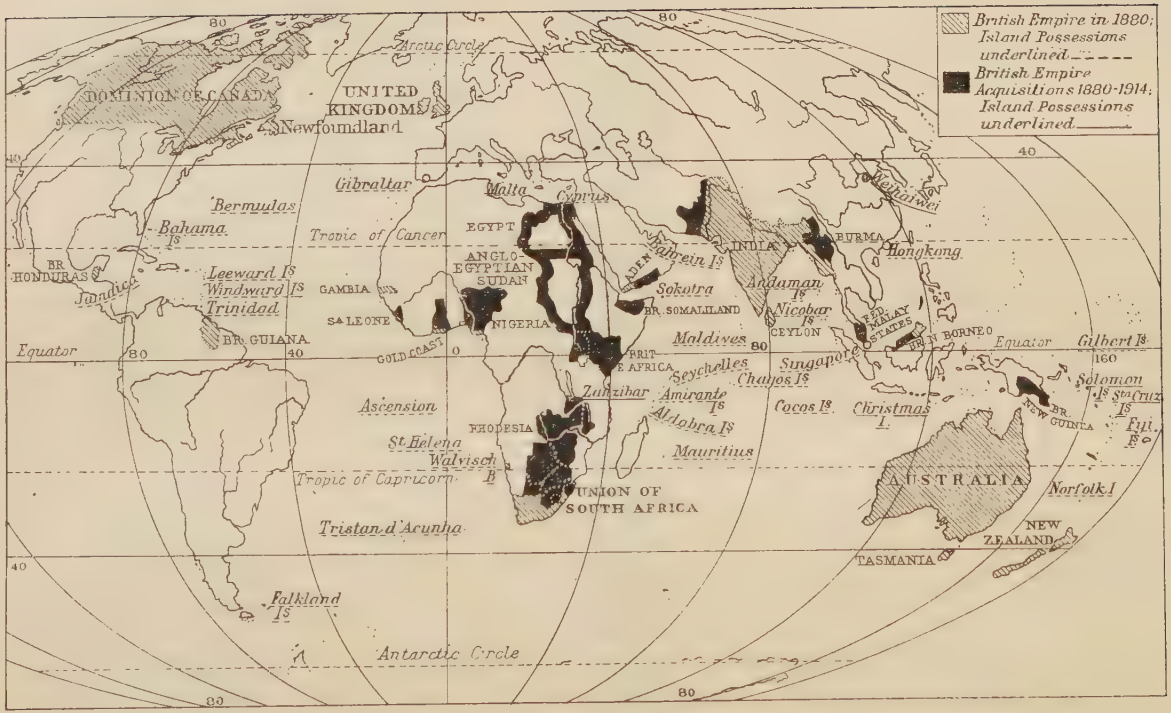


FIG. 44.—The British Empire, 1880–1914.

BOOK IX

THE RIVALRY OF WORLD-POWERS AND THE RISE OF NEW SOCIAL AIMS (1880–1914)

THREE outstanding features marked the generation which lay between the fall of Disraeli and the outbreak of the Great War. They affected not only the British peoples but the whole world.

One was the eager imperialist rivalry of the European Powers, which led to the rapid partition of all the unoccupied regions of the world, the extension of the control or influence of European civilisation over the whole globe, and the emergence of a group of world-powers whose mutual fears and suspicions were among the causes of the Great War. Alongside of this went the grouping of the Great Powers into two rival alliances, armed to the teeth, and watching for an opportunity to take advantage of one another. Britain had her share, and more than her share, of the new territories occupied during this period ; and her pride in her vast dominions grew rapidly. She strove to hold aloof from the rival alliances, but was in the end inevitably drawn into association with one of them.

A second feature of this period, closely related to the first, was the growth of a strong nationalist spirit among some of the lesser peoples of Europe, and also in the lands outside Europe. Within the British Empire it was seen in the growing nationalism of the great Dominions, in the rise of a nationalist movement in India, in the nationalist aspirations of the South African Dutch, and above all in the formidable nationalist movement in Ireland. These movements were partly a protest against the dominating power of the great empires. It was an extremely difficult problem to discover how these nationalist aspirations could best be dealt with. Some thought they should be met with sympathy ; others thought they should be crushed out by force.

The third feature of the time was the disappearance of the satisfaction with the social results of industrialism that had marked the middle of the nineteenth century. The conviction grew that the mass of working men and women did not get their fair share of the wealth that their labour helped to produce, and a demand arose that the power of the State should be used to rectify these inequalities, and to secure better conditions of life for the masses. In their extreme form these beliefs led to a revival of Socialism, that is, to a demand that the State should assume control of the whole process of wealth-production. But even those who thought that such drastic measures would be both impracticable and ruinous shared the growing belief that the power of the community ought to be more boldly used for the protection of the weak and the improvement of the conditions of life. This increasingly became the main object of political action. These ideas were at work not only in Britain, but in all the Dominions, and in all the European countries.

We are still too near the events of this period (which falls entirely within the lifetime of living men) to be able to form a sure judgment about them. But a period in which European civilisation was completing the conquest of the world, in which the question of the rights of peoples to freedom was being raised in new forms, and in which communities were beginning to strive to use their power to bring about a wider diffusion of happiness, is clearly a period that deserves to be studied and understood. The problems raised by this period were so tremendous that in the end they brought about the most terrible war in human history—a war that certainly marks a decisive turning-point in the affairs of the British peoples and of the world.

CHAPTER XLVII

NATIONALISM AND IMPERIALISM (1880–1895)

1. Gladstone's Second Government (1880–1885)

When Gladstone was returned with a large majority at the election of 1880 it seemed as if a new period of Liberal ascendancy was about to begin. But his second ministry was involved in difficulties from the moment of its formation.

Chamberlain and the Radicals. — To begin with, the Cabinet was deeply divided. A strong Radical movement was rising within the Liberal party, which filled the Whig members of the Cabinet with fear. Its leading spokesman in the Cabinet was Joseph Chamberlain, a Birmingham manufacturer who had done great work in the municipal government of Birmingham, and who was ready to make bold use of the power of the State to improve the condition of the people. He was an unflinching democrat, advocating universal suffrage and payment of members, and very scornful of the House of Lords. To pay for the cost of great social reforms, he wanted to impose heavy differential taxation on the rich, as a just "ransom," to be paid by those "who toil not neither do they spin." He also advocated free education, and the revival of British agriculture by the compulsory purchase of land for small holdings. To the Conservatives he appeared to be a red revolutionary; and as he did not hesitate to express his opinions openly, without any regard to the views of his colleagues, Gladstone had great trouble in keeping his Cabinet together. Chamberlain was the spokesman of the rising demand for a policy of social reconstruction; and as he was, next to Gladstone himself, much the ablest man in the Government, he had a strong hold upon the rank and file. He was also an imperialist, sharing with his friend Dilke, another advanced Radical, a strong belief in the importance of strengthening the Empire.

Domestic Reforms.—In spite of Radical pressure, however, the Government was not able to achieve very much in the direction of domestic reform, partly because its attention was engrossed by a succession of difficult foreign and colonial problems, partly because the Irish party and a small group of Conservatives led by Lord Randolph Churchill were doing their best to make the conduct of public business impossible by parliamentary obstruction—with such success that a complete breakdown of the system of parliamentary government almost seemed to be imminent. Nevertheless, some important changes were made. Attendance at school was made compulsory for all children (1881); this was the logical consequence of the Act of 1870, but it could not be required by that Act, because the schools had not then been provided. Employers were made liable for accidents to their employees while at work (1880); this was the beginning of a long series of laws which imposed new obligations upon employers. A Married Women's Property Act (1882) undid the gross injustice whereby the property of married women had

hitherto belonged to their husbands; this was the beginning of the movement towards equal rights for women. Finally, in 1884, the Third Reform Act was passed, which conferred the vote upon agricultural labourers and upon all householders in towns; this practically established democracy, so far as the male half of the population was concerned. There was a sharp conflict with the House of Lords over this Act, and an agitation for the "mending or ending" of that House was started. But the Lords accepted the Act on condition that it was accompanied by a Redistribution Act, whereby the country was divided into single-member constituencies of approximately equal size.

Parnell and Ireland.—Ireland occupied most of the time of Parliament, because the Irish problem had reached a critical stage. Parnell had now become the leader of the Home Rulers, and under his strict discipline they so greatly hampered the course of discussion that the traditional freedom of debate, which the House of Commons had always prized, had to be seriously restricted. Parnell and his colleagues did not regard themselves as members of a united parliament, but as the spokesmen of a subjugated nation, who would use every means, including if need be the wrecking of Parliament, to win their national independence. He had become the "uncrowned king" of Ireland. The Land League, which he had founded in 1879, was stimulating the tenants to refuse payment of their rents. When a tenant was evicted, the order was that any one who took his farm should be, in Parnell's words, "treated as a leper"; and the name of a land agent, Captain *Boycott*, who was a victim of this treatment in 1880, has been added to the dictionary as a synonym for this kind of ostracism. Crimes of violence, including even midnight murder, became common: there were over 2,000 cases in 1880. Parnell did little to discourage these outrages, though he was not responsible for them. The American-Irish organisations of the Fenians and the Clan-na-gael were busily at work.

The Irish Land Act.—Gladstone's Government dealt with this terrible situation in two ways: first by trying to remove the real grievance; secondly, by strictly enforcing the law. For the first purpose the *Land Act* of 1881 was passed. It established a land court, empowered to fix fair rents on the application of either landlord or tenant; once the rent was fixed it could not be altered for fifteen years. At the same time, the Act provided that the State should advance three-quarters of the purchase price to any tenant who chose

to buy his land. This was the boldest interference with landlord-rights that had ever been undertaken. It aroused furious indignation among English landlords ; but it did not satisfy Parnell, who wanted nothing short of Home Rule.

Kilmainham and Phœnix Park.—Meanwhile, strong Acts for the maintenance of order had been passed, and numerous arrests were made. At the end of 1881 Parnell and six of his colleagues were lodged in Kilmainham gaol, though there was no proof that he was responsible for the outrages, which increased after his arrest. In 1882 Chamberlain made an agreement with Parnell (the " Kilmainham treaty ") whereby Parnell agreed to use all his influence against outrages, and to support the Government's land policy, provided that some provision was made to prevent tenants being evicted for arrears of rent. Here was a chance of peace, which Gladstone eagerly welcomed. Forster, the Chief Secretary who had arrested Parnell, indignantly resigned. A new Chief Secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, was appointed to initiate the policy of conciliation. But on the day on which Lord Frederick entered Dublin (May 6, 1882) he was murdered in Phœnix Park, along with the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Burke, by a group of Irish extremists, who were known as the Invincibles. This tragedy destroyed, as it was meant to do, the possibility of peace, which had seemed to be within reach. It turned the sentiment of England and Scotland violently against the Irish. For the rest of Gladstone's Government, nothing could be done but to enforce the law. The task was carried out firmly and justly by Lord Spencer. But sullen unrest continued in Ireland, and incessant obstruction in the House of Commons. Some began to ask themselves whether this state of things could continue, and whether some form of Irish self-government was not the only way out of the difficulty ; and leading Liberals, such as the great journalist, John Morley, became strong advocates of Home Rule.

2. Foreign and Colonial Entanglements

Meanwhile the Government had been involved in one difficulty after another oversea.

Afghanistan.—First the disastrous Afghan adventure (p. 615) had to be wound up. It was decided to withdraw from Afghanistan, as soon as Roberts' brilliant march to Kandahar had restored British

prestige (1880). The decision was right and necessary, but it looked like accepting a humiliation.

The Transvaal: Majuba.—Then followed a rebellion among the Boers of the Transvaal, who had never accepted the annexation of 1877 (p. 620). Gladstone had condemned the annexation at the time; he did not want to see another Ireland created in South Africa *; and he at once opened negotiations to discover what terms would satisfy the Boers. In the midst of the negotiations, the Boers won a striking success. A small body of 500 British troops had been posted on Majuba Hill, commanding the important pass of Laing's Nek, which leads from the Transvaal to Natal. The Boers crept up the hill in the night, and overpowered its garrison (February 1881). In a military sense, this was an unimportant event; large British forces were assembling, which could certainly have crushed the Boer resistance. Gladstone thought that this incident ought not to stop the negotiations, and that lives ought not to be spent merely for the sake of prestige. He therefore concluded a treaty whereby the Transvaal Boers were granted complete autonomy, subject to their foreign relations being under the control of the British Government. This was regarded, both in South Africa and in Britain, not as an act of magnanimity, but as a humiliating surrender; and the troubles which followed later were attributed to it. It is probably true that the more ignorant Boers thought they had defeated the British Empire, and were encouraged to hope that they might in time secure the aim of an independent Dutch South Africa; for among them, as in Ireland, the nationalist spirit was at work. Three years later the agreement was revised in the *Convention of London* (1884), which provided that the Transvaal should not make a treaty with any other State except the Orange Free State unless the British Government assented.

Partition of Africa.—The Gladstone Government also had to deal with the first movements of the European Powers towards the Partition of Africa. That question will be dealt with elsewhere. It was a problem of a new kind, and involved difficult relations with both France and Germany. The attitude adopted by the Government was to welcome the participation of other Powers in the civilisation of Africa, and to secure (as was done in the Conference of Berlin, 1884) that in the annexed territories slavery should be

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*d* and *e*.

prohibited and freedom of trade, so far as possible, secured. It also declared a protectorate over *Nigeria*, where British trading interests were menaced by the advancing power of France.

Russia and India.—In 1885 a very dangerous situation arose with Russia, and war was almost precipitated. The advancing Russian forces in Central Asia came into collision with the Afghans at Penjdeh. For a moment war was so near that war-credits were asked from the House of Commons, the army and navy were ready for action, and Port Hamilton, on the coast of China, was occupied as a naval base against Vladivostock in case of need. But the danger was staved off by the appointment of a joint commission to delimit the frontier.

The Egyptian Question.—The most serious entanglement into which Gladstone's Government found itself drawn was in Egypt. Since the time of Mehemet Ali (p. 547) Egypt had been a practically independent State, though its Khedive was nominally a vassal of the Sultan. From 1863 to 1879 the reigning Khedive had been a reckless and ambitious spendthrift, Ismail Pasha. He had completed the conquest of the Egyptian Sudan (the upper valley of the Nile), which Mehemet had begun.* The work had been done for him by two adventurous Englishmen, Samuel Baker and Charles George Gordon, who successively acted as Governors of that province, and carried Ismail's dominion as far south as the great lakes. Gordon, † who was in the Sudan from 1874 to 1879, was one of the noblest of Englishmen : at once a mystic, a saint and a soldier, he could command the devotion of simple folk, and in the eyes of the British people he was a hero of romance.

The Revolt of Arabi.—The cost of this and other adventures, as well as his general extravagance, reduced the Khedive almost to bankruptcy ; this was why he sold his Suez Canal shares to Disraeli in 1875. He also borrowed wholesale from French and English financiers. In 1876, in order to obtain some security for these loans, the financiers obtained the establishment of an international *Caisse de la Dette* in Egypt : it received about half of the revenues of Egypt, and also had some rights of control over the rest. Thus European finance wielded great influence in Egypt, and all the European

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*a* ; Introduction, p. 31, fig. 48 ; and the larger Atlas, Plate 88*a* and *b*.

† There is a short Life of Gordon by Sir W. Butler (English Men of Action). Lytton Strachey has a brilliant essay on Gordon in *Eminent Victorians*.

FIG. 45.—Egypt and the Sudan.

Powers had a voice in Egyptian affairs. Ismail misgoverned Egypt so badly that in 1879 the Powers urged the Sultan of Turkey to depose him, and his son Tewfik took his place. But the Egyptian army resented both the power of the European financiers and the control of the Turkish royal house. A nationalist movement sprang up among the Egyptian officers, led by Arabi Pasha, and in 1882 they got control of the Egyptian Government. The anti-European spirit which they represented was very dangerous to the Europeans in Egypt, especially as the country was falling into a state of anarchy. Their lives and property were seriously menaced.

British Intervention.—What was to be done? The Powers consulted together, but could not agree. The Sultan of Turkey would take no responsibility. As France and Britain were chiefly concerned, the French Government proposed that they should take joint action. A combined fleet was therefore sent to Alexandria. But when a nationalist tumult broke out in that city, and Europeans were murdered, the French fleet withdrew, the French

Government having in the meanwhile been changed. The British fleet bombarded the forts of Alexandria, and landed marines to protect the Europeans. But this was not enough. Order must be restored. As nobody else would act, the British Government sent an army under Sir Garnet Wolseley, which defeated Arabi at *Tel-el-Kebir* (September 1882), captured the leaders of the revolt, and occupied Cairo. This was done, however, on a pledge that the British army would be withdrawn as soon as order was restored ; and the Government evidently believed that this could be quickly accomplished.

Baring in Egypt.—In reality it was an extremely complex and difficult task to restore order and competent government in a country which was so laden with debt, and which had been so long and so badly misgoverned. The position of the British representative was entirely anomalous. Britain was not the suzerain power in Egypt : that position belonged to Turkey, and Turkey made difficulties. More serious, the *Caisse de la Dette* controlled half the revenues, and wielded great powers ; while Egyptian sentiment was easily offended. It demanded a man of extraordinary powers to deal with such a situation. He was found in Evelyn Baring, afterwards Lord Cromer, who was sent to Egypt as " Consul-General " in 1884, and achieved miracles during the next few years.

The Mahdi in the Sudan.—A further difficulty arose from the question of the Sudan. In 1881 a fanatic claiming to be the Mahdi (or Messiah) had arisen in the far south of that huge province. He appealed to the fanaticism of the tribesmen, and rapidly made himself master of a great part of the Sudan. In 1883 an Egyptian army under a British officer, Hicks Pasha, was sent out to deal with him. It was annihilated. This meant that the Sudan was lost ; and that Egypt also would probably be overrun unless the British army remained to protect it.

The Death of Gordon.—What was to be done about the Sudan ? Did the undertaking to " restore order " mean that Britain must reconquer the Sudan for Egypt and engage her soldiers in a war in the heart of Africa ? The Government declined to accept this view, and decided that the Sudan must be abandoned. But in that case the Egyptian garrisons in the province must be withdrawn. To perform this difficult task, General Gordon was asked to return to the Sudan. He undertook the task (1884). But when he was back in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, he found it hard to see the province he had once ruled given over to savagery. He delayed the

evacuation, sending bewildering and contradictory messages to Baring at Cairo. Soon it was too late. He himself was isolated. It became necessary to send an expedition to relieve him. The Government wavered. The experts quarrelled about the right route. Finally, after unhappy delays, a force under Wolseley made its way up the Nile, only to find that Gordon had been overwhelmed and killed (January 1885). The news of the hero's death was heard with shame and anger at home. All the blame was visited, not quite fairly, upon the Government. Nothing in all its varied history did it more harm.

Fall of the Government.—Everything had combined to harass the second Gladstone Government. Divided among themselves by the quarrels between Whigs and Radicals, they had had to face a practical breakdown of the parliamentary system, a state of revolution in Ireland, a menace of war from Russia, a difficult situation in South Africa, and an extraordinarily complex problem in Egypt. Their prestige declined rapidly; and, being defeated on a detail of the budget of 1885, they were not sorry to resign.

3. Gladstone and Home Rule

The Election of 1885.—For a few months, until the time came for a general election, the Conservatives, though in a minority, took office under Lord Salisbury. The most critical question with which they had to deal was that of Ireland. They let it be known that they hoped to govern Ireland "without exceptional measures"; and Lord Carnarvon, their Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in trying to conciliate the Irish leaders, conveyed the impression that his party would be willing to go some way towards Irish self-government. The result was that in the election every Irish vote in England and Scotland was given to the Conservatives. Meanwhile, Gladstone had come to the conclusion that the only way of making peace, and of restoring the efficiency of Parliament, was some measure of self-government for Ireland. He did not announce his conversion until after the election, but he privately offered Liberal support to Lord Salisbury if he would undertake the solution of the problem. The election (December 1885) confirmed Gladstone in his opinion. It gave the Liberals a majority of eighty-six over the Conservatives. But there were eighty-six Irish Home Rulers. The Home Rulers held the balance, and could make government impossible. In these conditions parliamentary government was unworkable.

The First Home Rule Bill.—Gladstone resolved to make the concession, and to make it fully. But his decision shattered his party. Some of his leading Whig supporters, notably Lord Hartington, declined to join his Government. Chamberlain, who had advocated the establishment of a limited degree of self-government for Ireland, joined at first, but withdrew when he discovered how far Gladstone meant to go. Gladstone's scheme gave Ireland complete autonomy in local affairs, but made a reservation for foreign policy, defence and customs duties ; that is to say, it did not go nearly so far as the scheme ultimately adopted in 1921. But it would have been accepted by Parnell and his followers ; and, combined with a large scheme of land-purchase (which was also introduced) Gladstone believed that it would have brought peace. Undismayed by the secession of many of his leading followers, the old man—he was now seventy-six years of age—persisted with his proposals, fighting with a courage he had never surpassed. He was defeated on the second reading by a majority of thirty. Ninety-three Liberal members voted against him. They included nearly all the Whigs, led by Lord Hartington ; some of the old-style Radicals, led by John Bright ; and some of the modern Radicals, led by Chamberlain. The Liberal party was shattered. In particular, it had finally lost nearly all the old Whig aristocrats who had clung to it through all the troubles of the nineteenth century.

Fall of Gladstone.—From Parliament Gladstone appealed to the country. The verdict of the country went definitely against him. It returned 316 Conservatives and 78 Liberal Unionists against 191 Liberals and 85 Irish Nationalists. An attempt to find a basis for the reunion of the divided Liberals (1887) came to nothing. More and more the Liberal Unionists—the Whigs easily, the Radicals with greater difficulty—threw in their lot with the Conservatives. Nevertheless, the old man went on fighting during the next six years : the cause of Irish self-government had become the dominating passion of his life.

4. The First Unionist Government (1886–1892)

Salisbury in Power.—For six years, from 1886 to 1892, a Conservative Government, with Lord Salisbury * as Prime Minister,

* There is an essay on Salisbury by C. H. K. Marten in Hearnshaw's *Prime Ministers of the 19th Century.*

held office with the support of the Liberal Unionists. The main interest of these years lay in foreign policy and the expansion of the Empire. By a series of agreements, in nearly all of which Britain played a leading part, the partition of Africa and of the Pacific islands was completed ; and the result was an enormous increase of the area of the British Empire. The character and results of this expansion will be described in the next chapter. Lord Salisbury's reputation mainly rested upon his conduct of foreign affairs. The pivot of his policy was the maintenance of friendly relations with Germany, to whom he ceded the island of Heligoland as part of a bargain about Africa (1890) ; but he was careful to stand aloof from the rival alliances into which the Great Powers were drifting, and he maintained an attitude of "splendid isolation." Secure in her naval strength, Britain seemed to be able to stand alone. The strength of the navy was substantially increased by the Navy Act of 1887, and the principle was laid down that the British fleet must always be equal to that of the next two naval Powers combined. The two Powers against whom the navy was measured were, at this date, France and Russia, who were regarded as Britain's most dangerous rivals.

Queen Victoria's Jubilee.—The vigorous imperialism of the Government reflected the growing imperialist sentiment of the country. This sentiment found a focus when, in 1887, the Jubilee of Queen Victoria was celebrated with brilliant imperial pageantry. The queen had remained in seclusion ever since the death of her adored husband in 1861, and this seclusion had been so unpopular that in the 'seventies there was a considerable growth of republican opinion. But she had always been exemplary in her devotion to duty, and although her people saw little of her, she had exercised a real influence upon successive governments, especially in foreign affairs, while loyally observing the duties of a constitutional sovereign. She was a masterful lady, with strong predilections : she intensely disliked Gladstone, who "treated her as if she were a public meeting" ; she had a warm affection for Disraeli, who comforted her with chivalrous deference and delicate flattery ; but she never allowed her strong personal and party preferences to stand in the way of the constitutional duty which Melbourne had taught her fifty years before. Now, when the inevitable retrospect was made of fifty years of astounding progress, this little old lady in widow's clothes seemed to be the very symbol of the unity of the far-scattered British

peoples and of their long history. Her Jubilee became a pageant of empire. It was attended by the princes of India and the prime ministers of the free daughter-nations ; and the occasion was seized for the first *Colonial Conference* in which the common affairs of the Empire were discussed.

Growth of Social Unrest.—Alongside of the growth of imperial sentiment there was a growing dissatisfaction with existing social conditions, and a demand for social reconstruction. Charles Booth began (1889) his studies on *The Life and Labour of the People in London*, which showed how large a proportion of the population lived below the poverty-line. General Booth turned his Salvation Army (founded in 1878) to work among the "submerged tenth," and his book *In Darkest England* (1890) revealed terrible conditions. Arnold Toynbee (1883) began the intimate study of slum conditions and started the creation of University Settlements. There was a rapid revival of socialist theories, stimulated by the teaching of an American writer, Henry George, whose book *Progress and Poverty* was published in 1880. A Social Democratic Federation had been founded (1881) to preach the doctrines of Karl Marx. It appealed to many young workmen, such as John Burns, who was imprisoned in 1887 for addressing a prohibited Socialist meeting in Trafalgar Square. The Fabian Society (founded in 1883) was working out a new body of Socialist doctrine, and its tracts had myriads of sympathetic readers. New ideas were fermenting.

The New Trade Unionism.—A significant change was also beginning in the trade union movement. Since the foundation of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers in 1851 (p. 581) its methods had been widely imitated, and powerful national trade unions had grown up in the skilled trades. But the unskilled trades had hitherto failed to organise themselves. In 1888 the match-girls and the gas-workers won remarkable successes by strikes, which led to the formation of unions. In 1889 a prolonged strike among the London dockers—the most difficult of all classes of workers to organise—was led to victory by John Burns, and awoke widespread sympathy. The unions of unskilled workers, unlike their predecessors, could not levy large subscriptions, or promise substantial benefits to their members. They had to adopt other methods to achieve their aims. In place of the conservative policy of the older unions, they began to advocate more vigorous strike action, and also political action through Parliament. The emergence of the New Unionism, as it was called,

was a political event of the greatest importance. As yet it was only beginning.

Domestic Reforms. — The Conservative Government of 1886–1892 was neither unsympathetic nor unprogressive. The ablest of its younger men, Lord Randolph Churchill, had Radical sympathies; he was opposed to foreign adventures and large military outlay, and although he had to resign the Chancellorship of the Exchequer because of his lack of sympathy with the policy of the Government, his influence remained strong. Chamberlain, leading the Liberal Unionists in the Commons, had not ceased to be a Radical. The influence of these men was felt in the valuable legislation which this Government introduced. In 1888, by the *Local Government Act*, it established representative County Councils in every county, which took over the administrative functions of the Justices of the Peace, and thus put an end to the rule of a governing class in almost the last sphere in which it had survived. At the same time, London was endowed for the first time with a central governing body, the London County Council, which promptly entered upon a period of vigorous constructive reform. In 1891, elementary education was made free, though not without many outcries from those who believed that parental responsibility would be undermined. And in the same year a valuable Factory Act prohibited the employment of children below the age of eleven, and reduced the legal hours of labour for women.

Irish Policy.—But it was still the affairs of Ireland which engrossed most of the attention of Parliament. The law was steadily enforced, though not without the aid of "exceptional legislation"—the Crimes Act of 1887. Although there were still occasional affrays, and members of Parliament were still liable to be locked up, there was an undoubted diminution of violence. Conservatives attributed this to firm government; Liberals attributed it to the fact that, since their cause had been taken up by one of the great parties, the Irish could now trust to constitutional rather than revolutionary methods. But with "firm government" was combined an honest attempt to redress the economic ills which had been so long disregarded. A Land Act of 1887 accepted and extended the principles of Gladstone's Act of 1881. A Land Purchase Act of 1891 provided that advances should be made to any tenants wishing to buy their holdings. This did not go so far as Gladstone had proposed to go in 1886, but it was the beginning of a change of attitude which

ended in the buying out of nearly all the Irish landlords. At the same time, relief works were undertaken in the congested areas of the west. The Home Rule movement was to be killed by firmness and kindness.

The Parnell Commission.—It was not killed, however : the Irish continued to return Home Rule members in undiminished numbers. Meanwhile, Gladstone continued his campaign for the conversion of the British electorate. He believed that he was winning ground, and anticipated a large majority at the next election. He was greatly helped by a series of events which happened in 1888 and 1889. The *Times* published a series of articles asserting that Parnell had been directly responsible for the outrages of the early 'eighties, and printed documents which, if genuine, would have proved its case. Parnell denied the charge, and demanded an inquiry. It was held before three judges ; and in cross-examination it was proved that the incriminating documents had been forged by a wretched journalist named Pigott, who committed suicide. This led to a strong reaction in favour of Parnell. But this was offset when, in 1890, Parnell failed to offer any defence when charged as co-respondent in a divorce case. The Roman Catholic Church turned against him ; the majority of his party deserted him ; the Nationalist party in Ireland was hopelessly split ; and the Nonconformists of England were alienated. Parnell died in 1891, at the age of forty-six. Next year came the general election which had been expected to give a majority for Irish self-government. It gave a majority, indeed, but a majority of only forty, including the eighty-five Irish members.

5. Gladstone's Fourth Ministry

The Second Home Rule Bill.—In these depressing circumstances Gladstone, now eighty-three years old, formed his fourth ministry, and introduced a second Home Rule Bill. He fought the Bill through all its stages in the House of Commons with unabated courage and skill. But the House of Lords, as was inevitable, rejected it by an overwhelming majority. Gladstone would have liked to appeal once more to the country. His colleagues, anxious to show a record of other work, overruled him. Moreover, they were in favour of an expenditure on the Navy larger than he was prepared to accept. In 1894, therefore, he resigned, and withdrew from the arena in which he had played so great a part for sixty-three

years. Once again, in 1896, he emerged from his retirement, to denounce the Turks for Armenian massacres, as he had once denounced them for Bulgarian atrocities. In 1898 his fiery and tireless life came to an end.

The Rosebery Government.—There was a sharp division among his colleagues, which was accentuated when the queen gave the office of Prime Minister to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Rosebery, rather than to his rival, Sir William Harcourt, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the feud between these men and their adherents embittered the remainder of this Government's life. Nevertheless, the Government was active. In the Budget of 1894 (which was safe from interference by the House of Lords) Harcourt carried a very important financial change, by imposing heavy "Death Duties" on estates at death, graduated according to the size of the estate. This attack upon great wealth was bitterly criticised as an unjust scheme of confiscation, but it has become an essential part of the financial system, and has been greatly extended by later governments.

Fall of the Liberals.—Again, the Local Government Act of 1888 was supplemented by an Act which established district and parish councils, thus completing the machinery of democratic local government. Several further Bills were introduced in the House of Commons, but failed to reach the Statute-book: a Bill for the disestablishment of the Welsh Church; a Bill to ensure the payment of compensation to injured workmen; a Bill for local option in the licensing of public houses. With a House of Lords which was permanently and predominantly Conservative, none but a Conservative Government could carry any important legislation unless it had an overwhelming majority in the country. And this the Rosebery Government did not possess, as was shown when, in 1895, being defeated on a "snap" vote, it appealed to the country. Its opponents obtained an overwhelming majority. Thereafter, for ten years, the Liberals, divided and disheartened, dwelt in the wilderness; and a powerful Government, absorbing both Conservatives and Liberal Unionists, led the country through a very critical time.

CHAPTER XLVIII

IMPERIAL EXPANSION (1880–1895)

1. The Partition of Africa

The New Imperialism.—The most remarkable feature of the world's history during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was the rapid creation, almost without war, of a series of great colonial empires by the Powers of Europe. When this process began, the only European States, other than Britain, which possessed any territories outside Europe, were the old colonising Powers, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and France ; and, with the exception of France, they held only fragments of their old dominions. Spain had Cuba and Porto Rico in the West Indies, the Philippines in the Far East, and the Canary Islands in the Atlantic : she was to lose them all except the Canaries before the end of the century. Portugal had a few decaying ports in Angola and Mozambique, on the west and east coasts of Africa. Holland had her rich empire in the Malay Archipelago, with its capital at Batavia.*

Ambitions of France.—France possessed, of her old empire, Martinique and Guadeloupe in the West Indies, a strip of Guiana, Senegal on the West Coast of Africa, a couple of islands in the Indian Ocean, and two towns in India. She, alone of the European Powers, had added to her external possessions during the nineteenth century : she had conquered Algeria, on the north African coast, in 1830, had planted herself in Annam in the Far East, and had taken Tahiti and New Caledonia in the Pacific. France was thus the only European Power which had remembered something of her old colonial ambitions. After the Franco-Prussian War had robbed her of the leadership of Europe, she was tempted to seek consolation in colonial expansion, and for that reason played much the most active part in the new rush for oversea possessions.

The Congo Free State.—This began in 1876, when Leopold, King of the Belgians, who was deeply interested in African exploration, called a conference at Brussels on the opening up of Africa.†

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 84*a*.

† See School Atlas, Plate 56*a*, and larger Atlas, Plate 88*a*.

An International African Association was constituted, with branches in various countries; but the attempt to give an international character to the movement soon broke down. In 1878, however, when H. M. Stanley returned from his exploration of the Congo, Leopold engaged him to organise the administration of the Congo region in the name of the Association. This was the beginning of the Congo Free State (1879). It was administered practically as a private estate of the Belgian king.

French Activity.—French explorers had meanwhile been investigating the lands north of the Congo, and this region (later known as French Congo) was claimed by France in 1880. Portugal, however, put forward a claim to the whole of this coast, and indeed to all Central Africa from shore to shore, and this claim had to be decided upon. Meanwhile, starting from Senegal, the French were pushing into Western Sudan, from the Atlantic to Lake Chad and the upper Niger. Between 1880 and 1884 they made many treaties with native chiefs, and began to build up a great tropical empire. This alarmed the British merchants who traded with the west coast. They formed a United African Company, bought out their French competitors in the lower Niger, and in 1884 persuaded Gladstone's Government to declare a protectorate over Nigeria, without any clear definition of its limits.

Italy and Germany.—Italy entered the race in 1882, when she annexed Eritrea on the Red Sea Coast. And, finally, Germany rapidly pegged out various claims in 1883 and 1884, when she annexed German South-West Africa, and declared a protectorate over Togoland and the Cameroons. At the end of 1884 German emissaries also put forward claims to vague territories in East Africa behind Zanzibar. At the same time a group of British merchants, later organised into the British East Africa Company, established themselves in the region to the north of the German territory.

The Conference of Berlin.—Thus by 1884 the game of annexation was going on actively in every part of Africa. In that year a Conference was held at Berlin, primarily to decide on the large claims of Portugal (which were summarily rejected) and to define the area of the Congo Free State. The opportunity was used to define the rules of the game, and it was laid down that before an area could be claimed by any Power its occupation must be "effective." The Conference also laid down strict rules against slavery.

Partition Treaties.—But, in actual fact, the process of par-

tition was settled, not by any European conference, but by a series of treaties between the countries mainly concerned. These were the Great Powers : the little Powers were given no voice in the matter. As British interests were everywhere involved, and as almost every claim put forward by any other Power was challenged by some group of British traders as incompatible with British interests, Britain was a party to all the most important of these treaties. They were mostly negotiated by Lord Salisbury, between 1886 and 1892. The most important of them were two agreements made with France and Germany in 1890 and an agreement with Portugal (1891), which that country very reluctantly accepted, and by which she was compelled to submit to a definite limitation of her territories both in the east and in the west. There were also treaties with Italy, in 1890 and 1894, which defined the limits of the Italian and British or Egyptian territories on the Red Sea and in Somaliland.

Effects of the Partition.—Behind all these treaties lay an infinite amount of wrangling and bargaining. There were always groups in Britain who were convinced that British interests were being scandalously sacrificed by the lethargy or timidity of the Government. Yet when the results are summarised, there does not appear to be much substance in these complaints. For the outcome of the period was that while France obtained 3,800,000 square miles of African territory (including the whole of the vast but profitless Sahara desert), Britain obtained 2,700,000 square miles of far more valuable land, while Germany obtained only 933,000, Portugal 790,000, and Italy only 188,000. When it is realised that before the rush for Africa began the British Empire included something like one-fifth of the land-area of the globe, and that the other countries were endeavouring, late in the day, to obtain some counterpoise to her territorial wealth, the surprising thing is, not that Britain did not obtain more, but that she succeeded in obtaining so much, without war or serious conflict. It was indeed a triumph of diplomacy that the partition of Africa should have been carried out without war.

New British Colonies.—Disregarding South Africa, Egypt, and the Egyptian Sudan, the new territory which had thus been added to the British Empire, either in the form of wholly new annexations or of great additions to existing possessions, were as follows. (1) In West Africa, *Sierra Leone* and the *Gold Coast* Colony were both very greatly expanded by the annexation of extensive hinterlands ; while the rich province of *Nigeria*, which alone is

more than four times as extensive as Great Britain and Ireland, was wholly acquired during this period. (2) On the eastern side of the continent, British East Africa (now called *Kenya* Colony) and *Uganda* formed an addition to the Empire yet larger than Nigeria; while the hot and barren lands of *Somaliland*, at the mouth of the Red Sea, and the fertile and well-watered region of *Nyasaland*, farther south, were alone more valuable than the whole Italian empire. Most of these new lands were purely tropical territories, unsuited for the habitation of white men; but they yielded in abundance the tropical produce, notably vegetable oils and rubber, which were becoming essentials of modern industry. In East Africa, however, there were extensive highlands where white men could live and thrive. Thus the English-speaking peoples, who had already annexed, in America, Australasia and South Africa, the areas best suited for white colonisation, acquired control over almost the only areas of this kind which remained.

Chartered Companies.—For the development of these new territories, so rapidly acquired, a return was made to the methods of the seventeenth century, by the establishment of Chartered Companies with governmental powers. Thus Nigeria was placed under the control of the Royal Niger Company, and East Africa under the British East Africa Company; while, in the south (as we shall presently see) a British South Africa Company was at work, and in the Far East a Borneo Company. None of these companies, however, survived for long. When the initial period of development was over, they either ceased to exist, or were confined to commercial functions, and the normal system of Crown colony government was established to carry on the work of administration.

2. Rhodes and the Expansion of South Africa

Cecil Rhodes.—The most remarkable result of the imperialist expansion of this period was the development of British South Africa. It was, in the main, the work of a single man, Cecil Rhodes. The son of an English country parson, he was sent to South Africa as a boy, to win health. He arrived in time for the Kimberley diamond rush, made a competence before he was nineteen, and returned to Oxford to get an education. Before his return, he had made a lonely journey far into the interior, from which he returned with two convictions which dictated the course of his life. The first was that

the British Empire was so noble a fabric of justice and peace as to deserve the devotion of his life ; the second was that his work should be the extension of the British system over as great a part of Africa as possible. The essence of this British system was, for him, the combination of local freedom with imperial unity, and a large tolerance of differences of race. He dreamed of uniting Dutch and British in one great federal State, and of extending its influence over the rich empty lands to the north ; he dreamed also of making all Africa, in this large sense, British, and his plan of a Cape to Cairo railway was a part of this dream.

Boer Aggressions.—When he returned from Oxford, Rhodes devoted himself for some years to organising the diamond industry, and thus winning for himself the wealth and power which he needed as instruments. In 1881, just after Majuba, he entered the Parliament of Cape Colony, being then twenty-eight years old and a millionaire. It was the keynote of his policy to make close friendship with the Dutch, and he formed an alliance with the Dutch leader, Hofmeyr, who was very ready to work for unity. But at this period the Transvaal Boers, fresh from their victory at Majuba, were very restless and aggressive. Few as they were, they raided in every direction. They founded a " New Republic " in Zululand : the British Government recognised this, but to check further advance annexed *Zululand** (1888). They subjugated the native territory of Swaziland. They sent out raiders into Bechuanaland on the west, where they started two new republics called Stellaland and Goshen (1883). This was serious, because these lands lay across the line of communication to the north, and might also lead to a junction with the new German settlements in South-West Africa. Rhodes urged that this must be stopped ; and persuaded Gladstone's Government to send an expeditionary force under Sir Charles Warren to occupy Bechuanaland, the southern part of which was annexed to Cape Colony, while the northern part became a British protectorate (1884).

Occupation of Rhodesia.—The way was now open for an advance into the fertile northern plateau of Matabililand and Mashonaland, now known, in Rhodes' honour, as Rhodesia. There were rumours both of German and of Boer intervention in this desirable land. In 1887 Rhodes sent an agent to the Matabili king, Lobengula,

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*d* and *e*.

and obtained from him the exclusive right to extract minerals from his territory. On the strength of this, Rhodes founded the British South Africa Company, for which he obtained a charter from the British Government (1889), conferring power to open up and colonise a vast area stretching from the northern boundary of the Transvaal to Lake Tanganyika. In 1889 the first company of pioneers entered the country. Soon they were laying out roads, railways and telegraph lines, and bringing in settlers. This development went on so rapidly in the country of Lobengula's vassals the Mashonas that his warriors, the Matabili, broke into revolt (1893); after some hard fighting, the Matabili were overthrown and their whole territory was annexed. The land thus conquered was a lofty plateau, well suited for colonisation by white men, and but sparsely inhabited by African natives. It was full of mineral wealth, and suitable for every kind of crop. Thus an extremely valuable colony had been added to the British Empire in a very short space of time.

The Gold-Rush in the Transvaal.—The annexation of Bechuanaland on the west, and of Rhodesia on the north, completely hemmed in the Transvaal. And this was not the only ground for misgiving felt by those Boers who wanted to maintain their purely Dutch civilisation. In 1884 gold was discovered in the Transvaal, and two years later the richest goldfield in the world was opened on the Witwatersrand. Immigrants, not all of a desirable kind, flocked in by thousands. The mushroom city of Johannesburg came into existence. In a few years the immigrants—mainly British—formed half the population of the Transvaal, and owned most of its wealth. The older-fashioned Boers, and notably their President, old Paul Kruger, who had left Cape Colony with the Great Trek in 1836, and had lived through all the stormy history of the Transvaal, felt that the character of their country was imperilled. Kruger refused to grant civic rights to the immigrants, though they were paying the bulk of the taxes; he refused even to allow municipal self-government to Johannesburg.

Rhodes' Policy.—In 1890 Rhodes became Prime Minister of Cape Colony. He commanded the confidence of both Dutch and British. For half a dozen years he was almost a dictator in Cape Colony; and he was completely a dictator in the new land of Rhodesia away in the north. His dream seemed to be coming true: Dutch and English were almost ready to combine to make a great free State covering all South Africa. Passionately as he believed in

the British Empire, Rhodes did not desire that any direct sovereignty should be exercised by the mother-country; for him the Empire was a partnership of free peoples. He believed in home rule for every member of the Empire, and in the frank acceptance of differences of race and religion; that is why he gave £10,000 to Parnell to help his Home Rule agitation. The only obstacle to the unity-in-freedom of South Africa was Kruger and his policy. But Kruger was an old man. The younger Boers were affected by the new ideas. Only time and patience were needed.

The Jameson Raid.—This was the situation in 1895, when Rhodes lost patience and, in his own rough phrase, "upset the apple-cart." Eager to bring the Kruger regime to an end, he lent himself to a scheme whereby the "Uitlanders" of Johannesburg were to revolt, and were to be helped by a small force sent in from Rhodesia. The scheme went wrong. The revolt did not take place. But Dr. Jameson, the administrator of Rhodesia, led a raid with a small force into the Transvaal, where he was ignominiously forced to surrender (Jan. 1896). This act of criminal folly put Kruger in the right. It outraged and alienated Dutch sentiment throughout South Africa. It shattered the good understanding between the two races which Rhodes himself had laboured to build up. It was the beginning of a tragedy which will occupy us in the next chapter.

3. The Pacific and the Far East

Africa was not the only field of European expansion in these busy years. The Powers were only less active in the Far East, and in the Pacific.

Burma and Borneo.—In the Far East, Britain extended her dominions by conquering the remainder of Burma (1885), which was added to the Indian Empire. Farther south, the Malay States recognised her suzerainty. In the Malay Archipelago, where Holland was the dominant power, Britain also had a foothold. As early as 1841 a remarkable Englishman, Sir James Brooke, had established himself as Raja of Sarawak, on the north-west coast of Borneo.* Sarawak naturally recognised Britain as its suzerain power. So did the neighbouring Sultanate of Brunei. And in the north of this great island a British North Borneo Company, founded

* See School Atlas, Plate 55*a*, and the larger Atlas, Plates 82–83.

in 1881, acquired control over an area of some 30,000 square miles.

New Guinea.—East of Borneo lies the still greater island of New Guinea, the nearest neighbour of Australia. The Dutch annexed the western half of this rich island. In 1884 Germany announced the annexation of north-eastern New Guinea. This alarmed Australia, which had for some time been clamouring for the annexation of the island as a measure of security. The British Government reluctantly gave way, and annexed south-eastern New Guinea.

The Pacific Islands.—German traders had for some time been active in the Pacific, though the dominant trading interests were everywhere British. Here, therefore, was a possible further field in which the growing German zeal for colonisation might display itself. In 1884 Germany annexed the group of islands now known as the Bismarck archipelago, and changed the names of New Britain and New Ireland to New Pomerania and New Hanover. This, equally with the annexation of New Guinea, aroused the alarm of Australia and New Zealand, which had long been asking that a British protectorate should be extended over the Pacific archipelagoes. Indeed, many of the island peoples had themselves asked in vain to be taken under British rule. Lord Salisbury opened negotiations with Germany, which led (1886) to a treaty whereby a group of archipelagoes in the north were marked off as German, Samoa and other islands were declared neutral, and Germany agreed not to interfere elsewhere in the Pacific. This left a vast, vague "sphere of influence" to Britain, within which, from 1886 onwards, annexation went on steadily; until the great majority of the myriad islands of the South Pacific had been declared British territory.

Europe and China.—There now remained no sphere open to the ambitions of the Powers save China, the Turkish Empire and Persia. These regions were to be the subjects of controversy during the next period. But already trouble was brewing in China. Since the Chinese War of 1857–1860 European influence had rapidly penetrated the Chinese Empire. The treaty of 1860 had secured free access for traders and missionaries. Numerous mission-stations, schools, and hospitals had been opened. The European trader was to be seen everywhere, and British trade vastly preponderated, especially in the rich valley of the Yang-tse-kiang. Shanghai, the gateway of this area, had become almost a European city. For a

time it had seemed as if the Chinese system of government was going to break down altogether. A serious rising against the imperial government, known as the Tai-p'ing Rebellion, broke out in 1863, and spread to several provinces. To suppress it, the Chinese Government borrowed General Gordon. His success in reorganising the Chinese army and crushing the rebellion gained him the *sobriquet* of "Chinese Gordon," and was the foundation of his fame. Thereafter the Chinese Government set itself to Europeanise its system, borrowing officers from various European countries, especially from Britain. Sir Robert Hart became collector of European customs (1863), and so rapidly did the foreign trade of China grow that this became the chief source of revenue. Warships were ordered from Britain, and a modest navy was organised, mainly by British officers.

European Pressure.—The pressure of the European Powers was already beginning. Russia seized the Amur province, and built the port of Vladivostok. France had established herself in Annam and Tong-king, provinces regarded as vassals of the Chinese Empire; and in subjugating Tong-king had found herself drawn into a sort of war with China (1884). She was pressing on the south of the empire, Russia on the west and north, while British influence was penetrating from the sea.

The Rebirth of Japan.—Meanwhile, Japan had carried out a reorganisation of her national life far more rapid and complete than China ever attempted. The contact of Japan with the West only began in 1854. A violent reaction against European influence in 1862 had brought an attack from a mixed European and American fleet which proved the superior strength of European methods. Thereupon Japan had deliberately set herself to imitate the methods of Europe. Europe was slow to understand the thoroughness of this transformation. In 1894 its eyes were opened, when, in a war with China, Japan won a victory with a swift efficiency that Europe could not have bettered. The war between China and Japan was a turning-point in the relations between East and West. It opened a restless and difficult period, which added to the complications of European diplomacy for the next eight years, and was ultimately to have an important influence upon the fortunes of the British Empire.

CHAPTER XLIX

FOREIGN COMPLICATIONS AND THEIR RESULTS (1895–1905)

1. The Third Salisbury Government (1895–1902)

For ten years, from 1895 to 1905, Britain was governed by a powerful Unionist ministry, in which the strength of the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists was merged. Lord Salisbury was Prime Minister until 1902, when he was succeeded by Mr. A. J. Balfour. Supported by overwhelming majorities in both Houses of Parliament, and faced by a weak and divided opposition, this Government enjoyed more unfettered power than any of its predecessors since 1830. Its tenure of power falls into two parts, sharply divided by the South African War of 1899–1902.

Home Policy.—In the first half of the period there was very little legislation of the first rank, largely because the attention of Government and Parliament were engrossed by a succession of difficult problems abroad. There was an ambitious measure of Land Purchase for Ireland, on the same scale as Gladstone had projected in 1886. The system of County Councils was extended to Ireland, which had now become quiescent, for the Nationalist party was cleft in twain, and no leader capable of taking Parnell's place had succeeded him ; nevertheless the demand for Home Rule continued unabated. A valuable Workmen's Compensation Act was passed in 1897 : though limited to a few trades, it placed the right to compensation for accidents for the first time on a solid basis, and fixed the scale on which it should be paid. Chamberlain had promised, in the election of 1895, the establishment of a system of old-age pensions, but nothing was done beyond referring the question to a series of inquiries.

The Socialist Movement.—These were the only contributions which the Government was able to make to the demand for social reorganisation. Nevertheless, this demand went on growing in strength, and it was evident that a new era of social reconstruction must soon begin. The trade unions were increasing very rapidly in numbers, the unskilled unions more rapidly than the skilled. Through the Trades Union Congress they were beginning to demand legislation for the redress of social ills. The Socialist movement was

increasing its influence and capturing the younger and more energetic trade unionists. An Independent Labour Party had been founded as early as 1892, and in 1895 its first representative, Keir Hardie, appeared in Parliament. In 1899 the Trades Union Congress passed a resolution in favour of independent political action by organised labour. Next year (1900) the Labour Party came into existence.

The Diamond Jubilee.—But the nation as a whole paid, as yet, little attention to these matters. Its attention was engrossed by a succession of difficult problems in imperial and foreign policy, and it was at the height of its imperial enthusiasm. The culminating point of this enthusiasm was marked by the Diamond Jubilee of 1897, which was celebrated with even more impressive pomp and pageantry than the Jubilee of 1887. Once more the Premiers of the great colonies were present, and took part in a second *Colonial Conference*, which was felt to be an expression of the unity of the Empire, and in which, for the first time, the problems of imperial defence were seriously discussed. Some of the colonies undertook to make contributions to the cost of the Navy. Two years later they were called upon to take part in the first war in which contingents from all the principal members of the Empire were engaged.

The European Situation.—The politics of Europe and of the world were in a very dangerous condition in these last years of the nineteenth century. Each of the Great Powers had interests or ambitions in every part of the world, thanks to the work of empire-building in which they had all been engaged ; and there was always a danger that the outbreak of trouble anywhere would lead to a general conflagration. This danger was increased by the fact that the Great Powers were now divided into two alliances, which constantly watched one another. In 1879 Germany had concluded a close alliance with Austria, which became the Triple Alliance when Italy joined it in 1882. Bismarck was the creator of this alliance, and so long as he continued in power, he succeeded in persuading the world that it was really a bulwark of peace, not a menace to it. He also had a secret treaty with Russia, and a friendly understanding with Britain. But in 1888 a new Kaiser, Wilhelm II, came to the German throne, and in 1890 he got rid of Bismarck. Next year the secret treaty with Russia was terminated. Russia, feeling herself isolated, turned to France, and in 1891 a Franco-Russian Alliance was concluded, although its existence was not known until some

years later. Thus the Triple Alliance was faced by the Dual Alliance. On both sides a competition of armaments began, each fearing lest the other would become stronger and seize the opportunity to attack. Every increase on one side was followed by an increase on the other, and there seemed to be no way of escape from this vicious circle, which was bound to end sooner or later in a devastating war.

The First Hague Conference.—This nightmare had already begun to terrify Europe, and in 1899 the Tsar of Russia issued an invitation to all the nations to a conference at The Hague, to see if some agreement for common disarmament could not be reached. Twenty-six nations sent delegates, but, so far as disarmament was concerned, they could reach no result. None of the Great Powers which were chiefly concerned would consent to have its armaments limited or defined by any outside authority ; and the fatal competition went on. On one point, however, the Hague Conference reached a useful result. In order to encourage and facilitate the use of arbitration instead of war, it set up a panel of arbitrators whom the nations were asked to use. The practice of resorting to arbitration had indeed been growing steadily during the nineteenth century, and a striking illustration of its usefulness had just been given in the case of Venezuela (see below). The world wanted to get rid of the waste and cruelty of war. But so long as rival alliances went on competing in armaments there was very little prospect of achieving this end.

British Foreign Policy.—Britain still strove to stand aloof from the rival leagues, and indeed from any foreign entanglements. She still clung to "splendid isolation." On the whole, she was more friendly towards Germany and the Triple Alliance than towards France and Russia, with whom she had far more numerous causes of friction. Both Lord Salisbury and Joseph Chamberlain were strong advocates of friendship with Germany. As late as 1898, Chamberlain publicly urged that an alliance between Britain, Germany, and the United States would be the best safeguard for the peace of the world. But throughout the years from 1895 to 1902 there was a gradual alienation between Britain and Germany, the causes of which may be traced in the narrative of events set forth below. It became serious in the last years of the century, when Germany set herself to create a great fleet, and the Kaiser asserted that the trident must be in Germany's hands. The trident had been in Britain's

hands since 1588, and she had no intention of resigning it. In 1898 the construction of the great German fleet was begun. In 1900—in the middle of the South African War, when every German newspaper was denouncing Britain—the rapidity of construction was doubled.

This was the turning-point. It brought about a rapid change in the British attitude on foreign politics, and gave rise to a grave doubt whether, after all, "splendid isolation" was a safe policy. This gradual change of attitude was brought about by the series of difficult international problems which filled every year from 1895 to the end of the century.

2. Foreign and Imperial Problems

The Venezuela Boundary.—The first of the problems of the period was a difficulty with the United States. There had been a long-standing dispute between Britain and the South American republic of Venezuela over the boundary of British Guiana.* In 1895 Venezuela arrested two British officers in the disputed territory and appealed to the United States for support. President Cleveland thereupon issued a message to Congress (December 1895), in which he stated that he would appoint a commission to settle the matter and impose its decision by force. The American Secretary of State added that any union between a European and an American State was unnatural, and that, under the Monroe doctrine, the fiat of America was decisive on any question affecting the American continent. The imperialist spirit was evidently as strong in America as in other countries at this time. Such an attitude might easily have led to war. But the issue was wisely handled by Lord Salisbury. The Venezuela boundary question was referred to an Arbitration Tribunal composed of two British and two American representatives with a Russian chairman. Their award, which was definitely favourable to the British claim, was given in 1899.

The Spanish-American War.—By that time the United States had gone to war with Spain (1898) over the misgovernment of Cuba. In a short war the Spanish forces were completely defeated. Feeling in Europe was very strongly against America, and there was even some talk of intervention on the Spanish side. When an

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 76*b*.

American fleet attacked Manila in the Philippines, a German squadron which was present showed some inclination to intervene. British vessels, also present, placed themselves in the line of fire. Germany had entertained some hope of acquiring the Philippines from Spain. But at the end of the War the United States annexed not only the Philippines,* but Porto Rico, and set up a protectorate over Cuba (1899). At the same time she annexed Hawaii, and a little later divided Samoa with Germany. Thus the United States took her place among the imperialist and annexing Powers.

The Armenian Massacres.—Throughout this period there was constant and growing trouble in the Turkish Empire. Between 1895 and 1898 Europe was horrified by a series of massacres of the Armenian subjects of the Sultan, worse than the Bulgarian atrocities of 1876. Gladstone came out from his retirement (1896) to denounce this iniquity, and to demand that action should be taken against the Turk. No action was, or could be, taken. British influence at Constantinople had vanished. Russia had washed her hands of the Turkish problem, and declined to meddle. The dominant influence at Constantinople was now that of Germany: German officers were reorganising the Turkish army, and German capitalists were in control of the Turkish railway system. Germany had taken the Turk under her protection, and in view of this nothing could be done. In 1898 the German Emperor paid a friendly visit to the Sultan. He then went on to Jerusalem (still a Turkish city); and there he made a speech in which he proclaimed himself the protector of the Mohammedans throughout the world—most of whom were subjects of Britain or France. This was one of many episodes which led to a growing fear and distrust of Germany in Britain.

Balkan Troubles.—The Armenian massacres were not the only troubles in the Balkan peninsula. In 1896 there was a revolt against Turkish misrule in Crete, led by Venizelos, who later became Prime Minister of Greece: the Powers intervened, and a system of autonomy under a Greek prince was established in Crete. In 1897 the Greeks launched into a foolish war with Turkey: they were easily defeated by the German-trained Turkish army. Every year there were troubles in Macedonia, a province which would have been freed from Turkish rule but for Disraeli's intervention in 1878.

* See the larger Atlas, Plate 83*c*.

The government of the Turk in Europe, which had been bolstered up by Britain in 1854 and in 1878, and was now being bolstered up by Germany, was evidently a failure. These events may not seem to be a part of British history, but they filled the minds of the politicians ; and in the simmering caldron of the Balkans the poison of the coming world-war was being brewed.

Egypt and the Sudan.—The most remarkable British achievement of this period was in Egypt and the Sudan. Since 1884 Sir Evelyn Baring (better known as Lord Cromer) and his assistants had worked wonders in Egypt. They had saved Egypt from bankruptcy, reduced taxes and increased revenue, put an end to the oppression of the peasantry, reformed the system of justice, and reorganised the army. Meanwhile, the abandoned Sudan had fallen back into barbarism. The Mahdi, and after his death the Khalifa, had ruled so oppressively that the population is said to have shrunk from 12,000,000 to 2,000,000.

Reconquest of the Sudan.—In 1896 the British Government decided that the time had come to reconquer the Egyptian Sudan. The cost was shared between the British and Egyptian Governments, and both British and Egyptian troops were employed. The task was entrusted to Sir Herbert Kitchener, Sirdar of the Egyptian army ; and he proved himself to be an organiser of genius. In two systematic and carefully planned campaigns he advanced up the Nile to Khartoum, building a railway as he advanced. In 1897 the Sudanese host was shattered at *Omdurman*, opposite Khartoum ; a number of European captives who had long been kept in misery were released, and the Sudan was brought under joint British and Egyptian control. In a few years a work of reconstruction almost more remarkable than that which had been achieved in Egypt was carried out.

The French at Fashoda.—Before this work could be undertaken, a very dangerous situation had to be faced. The French, who had gradually made themselves masters first of the western and then of the central Sudan, had conceived the ambition of mastering also the eastern or Egyptian Sudan, and thus extending their empire from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. While Kitchener was advancing up the Nile, a small band of intrepid Frenchmen, under Major Marchand, made its way from the French Congo to the Upper Nile, and planted the French flag at *Fashoda*. Apart from the fact that Egypt had a historic claim to the Sudan, it was held to be impossible to allow the Upper Nile to fall under separate

control, because the life of Egypt depends upon the flow of the Nile, and one of the aims of British policy in Egypt was to regulate this flow by irrigation dams. Kitchener, therefore, under instructions from London, advanced swiftly to Fashoda and ordered Marchand to withdraw. This episode brought Britain to the very verge of war with France ; but the French Government accepted the rebuff, and by a treaty of 1898 recognised the whole of the Upper Nile country as belonging to the Egyptian Sudan.

The Powers in China.—Meanwhile, throughout all these years, trouble had been brewing in the Far East.* When, in 1895, Japan defeated China, she had demanded certain cessions of territory, including Port Arthur and the Liao-Tang peninsula, which dominated the gulf of Pe-che-li, leading to Peking. The European Powers were perturbed by the growing power of Japan. Posing as protectors of the integrity of China, Germany, Russia and France intervened, and required Japan to abandon Liao-Tang, on the ground that China could not be independent if any foreign Power held that point. Britain stood aloof from this protest. In reality, the three Powers meant to have a share of China for themselves. Two years later (1897) Germany seized and fortified the valuable harbour of Kiao-chau in the rich province of Shantung ; Russia demanded a lease of Port Arthur—the very place which Japan had been forbidden to occupy—while her railwaymen and her armies were steadily penetrating the great province of Manchuria ; and France demanded a port in southern China. Thereupon Britain also put in a claim, and leased from China the port of *Wei-hai-wei*, which she fortified as a naval base, in view of the possibility of war in these waters. The partition of China seemed to have begun, and the Powers began to argue about "spheres of influence"—the prelude to annexations.

The Boxer Rising.—Their activities were interrupted by a sudden national uprising in China against the foreigner, known as the Boxer Rising (1899). Scattered traders, officials, and missionaries were exposed to grave danger ; and the embassies of all the Powers in Peking were beset by formidable mobs (1900). To deal with this peril an international force was organised, of which Germany claimed to appoint the commander-in-chief. All the Powers, including the United States and Japan, contributed contingents. Peking was entered, the embassies were relieved, the Winter Palace of the

* School Atlas, Plate 55*a*.

Emperor was looted, and China was forced to pay a very heavy indemnity. But the Powers had learnt their lesson, and the projects of partition were dropped.

Anglo-Japanese Alliance. — Two years later, in 1902, Europe was startled by the conclusion of an alliance between Britain and Japan—the first general treaty of alliance that Britain had made since Waterloo. By this treaty the two Powers guaranteed the maintenance of the *status quo* in China, that is, they declared against partition. The treaty also provided that if one of the two were attacked by more than one Power, the other would come to her assistance. This provision contemplated the outbreak of a war between Japan and Russia, which came two years later. It was practically a warning to France and Germany not to meddle.

3. The South African War

The Position in South Africa.—Of all the troubles of the period, that which was most serious for the British peoples was the trouble in South Africa. It took a new form with the Jameson Raid of 1896 (see p. 653), which stopped the growth of good feeling between Dutch and English, strengthened the reactionary party in the Transvaal, and encouraged the Boers of Kruger's way of thinking to dream of driving the British out of South Africa altogether. In this vaguely-conceived aim they had some reason to hope for help from Germany; for in January 1896, when Jameson's raid was checked, the German Emperor sent a significant telegram congratulating the Boers upon having repelled the invasion "without the help of friendly powers." There were German forces in South-West Africa, near by. In the years following the raid, arms of all sorts were imported into the Transvaal in large quantities.

Before the raid, the British Government had been negotiating for better terms for the "Uitlanders," as the unenfranchised residents in the Transvaal were called. After the raid these negotiations became much more difficult. They were in the hands of Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary; and in 1897 Sir Alfred Milner, one of the ablest of British public men, was sent out as High Commissioner. But Kruger was unbending: he would not consent to let the votes of the Boers be swamped by those of foreigners. In June 1899, Milner met Kruger in conference at Bloemfontein, and demanded that the Uitlanders should be given the vote after five

years' residence. Kruger refused to go below seven years, unless Britain would withdraw all claim of suzerainty. Evidently things were moving towards war, and the predominant opinion in Britain was all for strong action. But the Dutch of Cape Colony, and many people in Britain, thought that the issue did not justify a breach, especially as time could be trusted to bring a change. During the summer British troops were drafted into South Africa, the forces there being totally insufficient to repel a Boer attack. In October 1899, Kruger launched an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of the British troops from the frontier. He gave two days' notice. On the day on which the notice expired Boer troops crossed the frontier at three points, invading Natal and besieging Mafeking and Kimberley on the western boundary.

The Strength of the Boers.—It seemed mere madness for two small republics—for the Orange Free State joined the Transvaal—to challenge the might of the British Empire ; and the sympathy of the whole world was on their side. But their chances were greater than appeared. They had some 70,000 men, skilled in their own type of warfare, good shots and good horsemen ; they had abundance of military supplies ; they had, at the least, the benevolent neutrality of the Cape Dutch, many of whom would have risen to join them had they invaded Cape Colony in force, and did so, later ; they hoped also for help from Europe, especially from Germany, and they might have got it if the British Navy had not stood in the way. On the British side there were available only a few thousand troops ; and, though others were on the way, and all the Dominions had volunteered to send contingents, the British Government had no idea of the magnitude of the task which lay before it.

Early Boer Successes.—The first events of the war went very badly for Britain. By November 2nd Sir George White, with the only substantial force in South Africa, was beleaguered in *Ladysmith*, in northern Natal ; while Mafeking and Kimberley were holding out against heavy odds. Meanwhile, Sir Redvers Buller had arrived, with some 80,000 men. But a large proportion of them had to be used on lines of communication ; and the rest were split into three armies, Methuen in the west aiming at the relief of Kimberley, Gatacre in the centre trying to repel a Boer invasion of Cape Colony, while Buller himself took 20,000 men to relieve Ladysmith. Within a single week, at the end of November, all three had met with stunning reverses—Methuen being defeated at *Magersfontein*, Gatacre at

Stormberg, and Buller at *Colenso*; while the beleaguered army in Ladysmith was beginning to suffer serious hardships.*

Great British Effort.—This series of checks had a sobering effect in Britain. There was even a fear that (like the capitulation

FIG. 46.—The Wars in South Africa.

of Saratoga in the American revolutionary war) they might lead to European intervention. British prestige suffered a heavy blow. The Government promptly resolved to send out every available man, and gave command to Roberts and Kitchener, the two most famous of British soldiers. Large contingents came also from all the

* See School Atlas, Plate 56*d* and *e*.

colonies, especially from Australia. By the end of the next year the British forces in South Africa were four times as great as the total of the Boer armies, and larger than the whole population of the two republics. They were the largest forces that Britain had ever put into the field.

Defeat of the Boers.—Roberts started his campaign in February 1900. Though Ladysmith was hard pressed, and Buller, trying once more to relieve it, had again failed at *Spion Kop*, Roberts determined to strike into the Boer republics from the west, and thus draw off the besiegers of Ladysmith. *Kimberley* was relieved by a sweeping cavalry movement under French ; then the main western army of the Boers under Cronje was forced to surrender at *Paardeberg* (February), on the anniversary of Majuba ; and in March Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, was occupied. This advance forced the Boers to give up the siege of Ladysmith. In May *Mafeking* was relieved. In June Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, was occupied, and the main Transvaal army, under Louis Botha, was defeated at *Diamond Hill*. On September 1st a proclamation was issued declaring the annexation of the Transvaal to the British Empire.

Guerilla Warfare.—This ought to have been the end of the war, but it was not. The gallant Boers would not yield. They broke up into a number of commandoes, under guerilla leaders who showed extraordinary brilliance in this kind of warfare. In the vast open country which they intimately knew, they were extremely difficult to trap ; and time and again they descended upon isolated bodies of British troops. They even extended the war into western Cape Colony. Kitchener, who had been left by Roberts, in November 1900, to finish off the war, was kept at work on this bewildering task for another eighteen months. The toilsome and costly method of holding down a huge country by lines of garrisoned blockhouses had to be adopted. Farms where the wandering commandoes got provisions were burnt, and the women and children were gathered in concentration camps, in some of which disease broke out ; these methods, however necessary, aroused much indignation.

Peace of Vereeniging.—At length, in May 1902, the Boer leaders—Botha, Smuts, and others—consented to negotiate for peace. They had displayed a heroic gallantry and steadfastness which nobody could fail to admire. In the Peace of Vereeniging they consented,

reluctantly, to the absorption of their republics in the British Empire. But they were promised self-governing institutions. And the victors, instead of exacting an indemnity, undertook to provide £3,000,000 for the settlement of the country.

The Work of Reconstruction.—Thus, at a vast cost in life, in money, and in the loss of prestige throughout the world, the unity of South Africa had been at last secured. Critics said that this war had been fought to acquire the goldfields ; but the goldfields remained in exactly the same hands as before, and Britain drew nothing but loss from the war. During the next four years the work of restoration after the waste of war was undertaken by Milner, with the aid of a body of picked men drawn from Britain. The work was well done. Milner was a man of imagination and generosity. But the conquered Dutch inevitably looked on sullenly at work that was done by their conquerors. The mines were reopened. Owing to a scarcity of labour, Chinese coolies were brought in under indentures, and lodged in compounds. This was represented as "Chinese slavery" ; and the introduction of a new racial element in a country whose racial problems were already acutely difficult was much resented. Even the promise of a limited degree of self-government did not reconcile the people : South Africa was conquered but unhappy.

4. The Reaction after the War (1902–1905)

Death of Queen Victoria.—In 1901, before the close of the South African War, which had weighed upon her heavily, the old queen died. She had been a part of the life of all the British peoples through the lifetime of nearly all her subjects. The Great White Queen had become a legend to primitive African tribes and remote Pacific islands. The world seemed different when she died. All the great Victorians had preceded her to the grave : Gladstone and Disraeli and Tennyson and Browning and Carlyle and Darwin and Dickens and Thackeray. Queen Victoria's death was indeed the end of an era ; the great but self-satisfied Victorian Age had expired in the disappointment of the South African War, and it was a new and very difficult era into which the British peoples had now passed.

Change of Temper.—The temper of the people also had changed. The exultant imperialism of the previous period had been sobered by the disillusion of the war ; there were misgivings

about Britain's position in the world; and the demand for social change was growing in strength. This was not represented in Parliament, because an election had been held in 1900, after Roberts' victories, but before the long, dragging tedium of the later stages; and the result had been a sweeping victory for the war-government.

Franco-British Entente.—One of the main signs of the new era was that Britain no longer felt safe in "splendid isolation"; and the conclusion of the Boer War was quickly followed by a change in the direction of foreign policy. The Anglo-Japanese alliance was concluded by the new Foreign Secretary, Lord Lansdowne, in 1902 (p. 663); it was the first fixed alliance which Britain had made for nearly a hundred years, apart from the temporary alliance with France at the time of the Crimean War. But a more important change followed, when in 1904—largely through the influence of King Edward VII—an understanding was reached with France, with whom British relations had been consistently bad for twenty years. The *entente* of 1904 was not in any sense an alliance, even for defence. It was only a clearing away of old subjects of controversy, which stood in the way of cordial relations. France formally recognised Britain's position in Egypt, and thus removed Lord Cromer's chief source of difficulty. In return, Britain recognised the prior right of France to intervene in the disorderly country of Morocco, the next neighbour of her Algerian colony. Other old controversies, such as the dispute over fishing rights in Newfoundland, were also settled. And an arbitration treaty was concluded between the two countries. There was nothing exclusive in these arrangements, which were published to the world, and nothing to prevent similar agreements with other countries. But the whole world recognised that the real reason for this patching up of old quarrels was that Britain was beginning to be nervous about Germany, as France had long been. Thenceforward the two countries tended to act together in the diplomatic discussions of Europe.

Educational Advance.—In the years following the South African War several important projects of legislation were undertaken by the Government. In 1902 it introduced an *Education Act* of great importance, which swept away the School Boards, transferred their functions to municipal and county councils, and imposed upon these bodies the duty not only of providing "elementary" education, but of creating a coherent system of education, leading up to the universities. Under this Act efficient "secondary" schools were

created in every part of the country ; and for the first time England obtained, what Scotland had long possessed, an intelligible and coherent national *system* of education. But the Act also imposed upon the education authorities the main cost of upkeep of denominational schools ; and this provoked intense opposition, which obscured the value of the other provisions of the Act.

New Universities.—At the same time a vigorous movement for the creation of new universities arose, inspired in a large degree by the conviction that Britain was suffering from her failure to provide facilities for higher training. In a few years, not by Government action but by spontaneous local effort, new universities were established in Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and Bristol—all on the basis of modest colleges which had arisen mainly during the previous twenty-five years.*

The Irish Problem.—Another measure of great importance which was effected during these years was the final solution of the Irish land problem, by an Act of 1903, under which the British Treasury advanced £100,000,000 to buy out all the Irish landlords and create a peasant proprietary. Alongside of this, a well-designed organisation for agricultural co-operation helped to bring a new prosperity to the Irish peasantry. Ireland had now long since passed out of the period of agrarian outrage which had marked the 'eighties. But she had not forgotten her desire for self-government. On the contrary, it was spreading to the landowner-class, hitherto staunch Unionists. In 1904 they put forward a scheme of devolution ; and the Irish Secretary, George Wyndham, had to resign because he had been sympathetic towards these proposals. The Nationalist movement was anything but dead. On the contrary, it now began to assume a new form. A body of enthusiasts began to preach the necessity of holding aloof altogether from British politics, since the British Parliament would not grant what Ireland demanded. This movement was called *Sinn Fein*, which means Ourselves Alone. It was born at the very moment when the policy of killing Home Rule with kindness seemed to be succeeding.

Chamberlain and Tariff Reform.—During the years 1903–1906, however, all these questions were dwarfed by the revival of the old controversy between Free Trade and Protection in a new form. Chamberlain, in his enthusiasm for the unity of the empire,

* See the larger Atlas, Introduction, p. 39, fig. 38.

was inspired by the idea of cementing it by fiscal bonds, and of creating something like the *Zollverein* or customs-union which had helped to make the unity of Germany. British trade also was suffering from the competition of Germany and the United States, and Chamberlain believed that it could be helped to hold its own by protection. In 1903, therefore, he started a vigorous campaign for Tariff Reform and Imperial Preference, and a tremendous debate, which lasted for three years, engrossed the attention of the country. But even Chamberlain's influence, which was now at its height, could not persuade the British people to abandon the system of Free Trade on which their prosperity had been built up. The most direct effect of his campaign was to split the all-powerful Unionist party. Chamberlain himself retired from office in order to be free to preach his doctrine; a group of convinced Free Traders in the Cabinet, including the Duke of Devonshire, retired because they thought the Prime Minister ought to have repudiated his powerful colleague. Mr. Balfour, who had succeeded Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister in 1902, tried to keep both sections together, and satisfied nobody.

Fall of the Conservatives.—The result was that in 1905 Mr. Balfour's Government had to resign, and make way for a Liberal Government under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman; and in the election of 1906 the Unionists were almost swept out of the field by one of the most sudden reversals of political fortune in British political history. Many things contributed to this result. The Free-Trade-Tariff-Reform conflict was perhaps the most important factor; dissatisfaction with the recent legislation of the Government contributed; disillusionment after the imperialist enthusiasm of the 'nineties counted for a good deal. But behind all this lay the vague demand for great measures of social reconstruction, which had been growing for twenty years, and had as yet obtained no satisfaction.

CHAPTER L

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE (1880–1914)

Between 1880 and 1902 the area of the British Empire had been increased in an unprecedented degree by the acquisition of new territories, mainly in the tropics. In the same period, and in the

following period down to the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, a very remarkable development also took place in the great self-governing colonies and in India, while the links which held the members of the Empire together were notably strengthened. These changes had so direct a bearing upon the part which they were all to play in the great ordeal of the War that it is important to study them before turning to the events of the last ten years preceding the War in Britain and in Europe.

1. Canada

Macdonald and Unification.—It was in this period that Canada developed from a struggling group of colonies but recently linked together into a powerful and united nation, conscious of its nationhood.* The building of the Canadian Pacific Railway (1881–1885) was the first great step in this process. It opened up the vast central plain, and revealed its immense fertility. During the 'nineties, and down to 1914, immigrants were pouring in in huge numbers, and the unlimited mineral and other resources of Canada were rapidly developed. The presiding genius of the first part of this period of growth was a Conservative, Sir John Macdonald, Prime Minister from 1878 to 1896. He was one of the great builders of Canada. He had been the main promoter of federation. It was his energy which pushed through the construction of the C.P.R. During his long tenure of power he set himself to make Canada economically independent of her great neighbour, the United States, and for this reason he developed a policy of high protection.

The Aim of Self-Sufficiency.—Macdonald's successor, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, held power for an almost equally long spell, from 1896 to 1911. He was a Liberal, and a French Canadian; and his long tenure of office helped to weld together the French and British elements in Canada. Although he favoured lower tariffs, and a trade agreement with the United States, Canadian opinion would not allow him to depart from the policy of protection. When in 1910 and 1911 he revived the old idea of a treaty of trade reciprocity with the United States, his ministry came to an end, and was succeeded by a Conservative ministry under Sir Robert Borden. Determination to avoid any sort of subordination to the United States was thus one of the dominating principles of Canadian policy. Laurier, however,

* See School Atlas, Plate 51.

initiated the practice of giving a tariff preference to British trade, beginning in 1897 with a preference of 12½ per cent. of the amount of the duties imposed, which was subsequently increased to 25 per cent. and then to 33⅓ per cent. But Canada, like the other Dominions, was determined to foster her home manufactures. The duties were high enough, in spite of the preference, to give her manufacturers a commanding advantage over their British rivals.

Boundary Disputes.—There were several disputes during the period between Canada and the United States—over seal-fishery in the Bering Straits, over the rights of American fishermen in Canadian waters, and so forth. Adjustments were not easily reached. But the most serious of these disputes was over the boundary of Alaska.* The United States had bought Alaska from Russia in 1867, and the cession included a long strip of the Pacific coast; but it had never been exactly determined whether the whole coast, including the shores of the longest inlets, were included. At the opening of the twentieth century a rich goldfield was discovered at Klondyke, in Arctic Canada, on the River Yukon, and there was the usual rush of diggers. Canada was anxious to obtain an outlet of her own by sea for the Klondyke. She claimed the head of one of the long inlets from the Pacific coast. After a long controversy, the question was referred to a commission of arbitration, consisting of three Americans, two Canadians, and the British jurist Lord Alverstone. Lord Alverstone voted with the Americans, and the decision therefore went against Canada. This decision aroused strong feeling in Canada, and gave rise to the belief that the mother-country could not be trusted to look after Canadian interests, especially in relation with America. Canada began to claim to have sole control over her own affairs, international as well as domestic.

Settlement of the West.—In the years before the war the progress of Canada, and especially the peopling of the west, went on more rapidly than ever. The prairie provinces became one of the great granaries of the world. The tide of immigration grew in volume: emigrants from Britain, between 1907 and 1914, were turning rather to Canada than to the United States, and there was a large migration of American farmers across the border. The growth of the west was recognised, in 1905, by the constitution of the two great provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, in place of

* See School Atlas, Plate 51, and the larger Atlas, Plate 79*b*.

the "districts," controlled by the Federal Government, which had previously existed. Later (1912) Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec were enlarged so as to include the greater part of the northern territories. But the main feature of these years was the growth of a strong and independent national spirit in the Canadian people. It was by no means incompatible with a warm loyalty to the British Empire, as the events of the war were to show. But the growth of this spirit, not only in Canada, but in all the Dominions, fostered the belief, in Germany and elsewhere, that the Empire would break into its component parts under any serious strain.

2. Australia

Federation.—The outstanding event in the history of Australia during these years was the federation of the six colonies in a single Commonwealth.* This was the outcome of a long discussion, which lasted for ten years (1889–1899). The chief difficulty came from New South Wales, the mother-colony, which had adhered to a policy of Free Trade, while all the other colonies had adopted Protection : as a common tariff was one of the mainsprings of a scheme of federation, New South Wales feared that she would have a protectionist system imposed upon her. The difficulties were overcome by 1899 ; in 1900 all six colonies passed Acts accepting a scheme which their representatives had drawn up in conference ; an Act of the British Parliament registered this decision ; and on the first day of the new century, January 1st, 1901, the Commonwealth of Australia came into being.

Economic Crisis.—Before the passing of the Commonwealth Act, Australia had passed through a very difficult economic crisis. The prosperity of the 'seventies and 'eighties had gradually dwindled. Immigration had almost ceased, trade was bad, and wages began to go down. In 1890 and the following years there was a very serious outbreak of labour troubles. The strikes of 1890 were the nearest approach to a general strike which the world had yet seen ; those of 1892 and 1894 were only less serious. In 1893 there was also a grave financial crisis. Banks failed wholesale, and the credit of the colonies was seriously impaired. Years of drought, which killed off a large proportion of the sheep, added to the troubles of the time.

* School Atlas, Plate 55*b*.

Labour in Politics.—Disappointed by the results of strike action, the trade unions began, as in Britain, to turn their thoughts to political action, and in all the six colonies Labour Parties were formed. Their first important victory was in New South Wales in 1896, when they succeeded in electing a solid block of members. Since then the Labour Party has been strong in all the States, and also in the Commonwealth Parliament. The first Labour governments in the world were those of some of the Australian States. To meet the growing strength of Labour, the older parties were gradually forced to unite.

Compulsory Arbitration.—The economic distress from which Australia had suffered, the frequency of strikes, and the strength of the Labour movement, led to exceedingly interesting industrial experiments, notably an attempt to introduce compulsory arbitration as a method of settling disputes. This movement began in Victoria in 1896, and spread to the other States. In 1904 the Commonwealth Parliament established an Arbitration Court to settle disputes affecting more than one State, under a judge of the High Court. This Court, and the State courts, have in certain conditions the right to fix wage-rates, which then become legally enforceable. The system has not been wholly successful. Trade unions have refused to accept awards which they did not like, and have resorted to strikes in spite of the court. But the scheme has been sufficiently successful to be kept in being, and it is an interesting attempt to substitute law for war in the industrial sphere.

Australian Nationalism.—The national spirit has been extremely strong in Australia, especially since the Union. It has shown itself in a determination to maintain a "white Australia," by the exclusion of Asiatic immigrants. At the same time, the powerful labour organisations have been jealous of European and even British immigration, lest it should result in a lowering of the standards of living. A high protective system has been established in the hope of making the country self-supporting; and although substantial preferences are granted to British trade, the duties are kept sufficiently high to prevent any effective British importation of the main goods produced in Australia. The cost of this tariff falls mainly upon agriculture, which has to sell its products at world prices, and therefore cannot be protected. The result is that the cultivation of the soil does not expand as rapidly as it might otherwise do. Population is consequently mainly concentrated in towns, and this largely

accounts for the strength of the Labour Party : half the population of the Australian continent is in four large towns.

Australia has thus been following a very novel and bold social policy, the aim of which is the maintenance of a high general standard of comfort by the exclusive use of the resources of a large continent for a small, pure-bred population. But the strong nationalist feeling of the Australians coexists with an equally strong imperialist sentiment. It is their pride that they are British ; and it is not only a " white " but a " British Australia " that their nationalist policy aims at maintaining.

3. New Zealand

Seddon and National Development.—The development of New Zealand was not unlike that of Australia. New Zealand had her period of depression and stagnation earlier than Australia, between 1879 and 1895, when immigration came to a standstill and progress ceased. In 1891, however, a Liberal Government under John Ballance (1891–1893) and Richard Seddon (1893–1906) undertook a very bold policy of national development, using the power of the State to stimulate activity in every direction. They set to work to create a population of small proprietors, by taxing large estates, by letting out Crown lands, and by buying more land for the purpose. Within a few years they had raised the number of farmers holding their land on a secure tenure to 70,000—one-tenth of the population. They encouraged the creation of trade unions, but set up representative boards of employers and employees in each industry, with an appeal to a national Arbitration Court in case of difference. They established old-age pensions, and State insurance ; they laid out capital freely on works of national development, such as railways ; and they imposed the main burden on the rich by means of graduated income tax and high death duties. In all these experiments they were in advance of the world, though they were soon to be imitated, in many respects, in Britain. At the same time, like the Australians, they not only excluded Asiatic immigrants, but discouraged immigration generally in order to maintain a high standard of living.

New Zealand Nationalism.—New Zealand had become very prosperous in the decade before the war, though her population, like that of Australia, was still dangerously small. Her people were fervently nationalist. But they were also the most enthusiastically British of all the great Dominions. They, like the Canadians and

the Australians, had adopted the nationalist policy of protection, and were aiming at self-sufficiency ; but like the other Dominions, they gave substantial preferences to British goods—desiring, if possible, to keep out all external products, but wishing, if they did come in, that they should be British. The unanimous adoption of Protection with British preference by all the Dominions was one of the main reasons why Chamberlain abandoned Free Trade in 1903, and advocated a return to Protection, even in a country which cannot possibly be self-sufficient. His scheme of an Imperial Customs Union was, however, negatived by the unwillingness of the Dominions to throw down their tariff walls against Britain.

4. South Africa

Unrest after the War.—In 1905, three years after the termination of the war, it was still uncertain whether the long and dismal story of strife which constitutes the history of South Africa had come to an end, or whether new trouble must be looked for. The conquered Dutch of the late republics, and also the Dutch of Cape Colony, were still inevitably discontented and unhappy, looking critically at the work which Milner was doing, and not appeased by the promise of a limited degree of self-government. The schemes which were announced reserved large powers to the executive. They were schemes not of responsible, but merely of representative, government—the same sort of system which had led to continual friction in Canada before 1846. It was felt to be unsafe to make larger concessions than this to enemies so recently conquered.

Self-Government and Federation.—But in 1906, before these schemes came into operation, Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman, the head of the new Liberal Government in Britain, announced that the Government intended at once to establish full responsible government in both the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. The first elections, in 1907, returned Dutch majorities ; there was a Dutch majority also in Cape Colony. But this did not lead to a revival of racial friction, as many feared. On the contrary, now that the four South African States all had constitutions of the same pattern, they could begin to discuss their future on equal terms. The result was that in 1908 Dutch and British delegates from all four met at Durban to work out a scheme of federation, which had so often been vainly urged upon them from above. The scheme was quickly and

unanimously adopted. It was ratified by the British Parliament in 1909. And in 1910 Louis Botha, who had eight years before been the commander-in-chief of the Boer armies, became the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa.

Racial Problems.—The difficulties of South Africa were by no means over. The conflict between the two white races was in a fair way of being settled, though it was inevitable that there should be a survival of ill-feeling. But the problem of the treatment of the coloured races, over which the differences between the British and the Dutch points of view had been a principal source of friction, was still unsolved. And an additional difficulty had been created by the introduction of large numbers of Indian settlers, especially in Natal. The Indians claimed equal rights as British subjects. The rising spirit of nationality in India was offended by the refusal of South Africa to grant equality, and this added to the difficulties of the government of India.

If the enemies of the British Empire hoped that Canada, Australia and New Zealand would break away when trouble came, they had better reason for expecting that South Africa would prove to be a source of weakness rather than of strength in a time of strain. That it was not so was due to the efficacy of the medicine of self government.

5. India

In India two questions demanded attention during this period. The first was the organisation of the frontiers against the possibility of attack by aggressive Powers. The second, and by far the more important, was the rapid rise of a nationalist movement among the Indian peoples, and (in some quarters) of a violent agitation against the continuance of British rule.

Conquest of Burma.—The territory of India on the east and north-east was rounded off when, in 1885, the kingdom of Burma was finally conquered and annexed after the Third Burmese War.* The immediate cause of this war was the conduct of King Thibaw, who had imprisoned some British traders. But behind this lay a deeper reason. Thibaw, fearing the British power, had been in relations with France. France, extending her empire in Indo-China, already at one point touched the Burmese frontier, and

* School Atlas, Plate 54.

seemed likely to make herself mistress of Siam. Unwillingness to see France established in Burma was one of the main reasons for annexation. In 1896 a treaty between France and Britain defined the limits and secured the independence of Siam, the only remaining independent State in that region ; and this ground of fear disappeared.

Tibet.—Again, in 1904, an expedition was sent to Tibet, over passes 19,000 feet high, and (after some fighting) a treaty was made with the Dalai Lama, the priestly ruler of that remote region. The reason for this expedition was that Russia had been opening negotiations with Tibet, and the fear of Russia was still active. But the possibility of an invasion of India over the all-but impassable wall of the Himalayas was remote indeed.

The North-West Frontier.—Throughout the whole history of India her only vulnerable frontier has been that of the north-west. When in 1880 the idea of mastering Afghanistan was finally abandoned, the organisation of the north-west frontier still remained important. The boundary between Russia and Afghanistan in the Pamirs was finally settled in 1895. Meanwhile, in 1893, the boundary between Afghanistan and the Indian Empire was finally delimited by Sir Mortimer Durand. The " Durand line " included in India a broad strip of wild country inhabited by warlike and unruly tribes, from Chitral in the extreme north to Baluchistan in the south. No attempt was made to subjugate these tribes, but frequent " punitive expeditions " had to be sent against them : in one of these, the Tirah expedition of 1897, no less than 40,000 troops were engaged. The policy to be adopted in regard to these tribes was determined during the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1899–1905). In order to keep frontier problems apart from ordinary provincial administration, he created a North-West Frontier Province, with its capital at Peshawar. All garrisons were withdrawn from the tribal area ; and a corps of Khyber Rifles was enlisted among the tribes to maintain order along the Khyber Pass route, which was only opened for traffic on certain days in the week.

Army Reform.—At the same time the Indian army was reorganised by Lord Kitchener, who went out in 1903 as Commander-in-Chief in India. The whole system was made to pivot on the defence of the north-west frontier. So long as Britain held the sea, India was now safe from any serious danger of attack.

Indian Nationalism.—The most remarkable feature of Indian history in this period was the rise and rapid growth of a Nationalist

movement, demanding national freedom and self-governing institutions. This was the inevitable and healthy outcome of the introduction of Western methods and ideas, and of the training of the Indian educated classes in English literature, which is the literature of freedom. But it was not easy to see how these aspirations could be safely satisfied in a land so vast, and so deeply divided in race, language, and religion, as India. The most difficult problem of government which the world presents was, in fact, being raised in India during the generation before the war.

Features of Indian Nationalism.—The Indian Nationalist movement had two aspects, which were really incompatible, but which were often combined. The one was a demand for the British institutions of parliamentary government, that is, for the fuller westernising of India. The other was an assertion that Indian civilisation was not only more ancient but far nobler than that of the West, from which it should be freed. This view was, in the 'eighties and 'nineties, beginning to supplant the older deference to the West. It was also beginning to be asserted that British rule had done nothing but harm to India ; that it was the cause of plague, famine, and poverty. All these ideas were limited, as yet, to the Western-educated classes, who formed not more than 1 per cent. of the population. They could only be diffused through the English language, which was the sole common medium of communication for the educated classes in all parts of India. Only a small minority even of the small educated class took the more extreme view ; the great majority always recognised that the unity, peace, and equal laws which had come with British rule alone made these aspirations possible, and that they must not be endangered. But the whole educated class naturally and rightly shared in the desire for some progress in liberty. This class included the lawyers, the officials, the journalists, the teachers, the traders—in short, the whole vocal part of Indian society. Its demands could not be permanently disregarded. At first, however, the movement took root only among the Hindus : the Mohammedans stood aloof.

Lord Ripon.—The first attempt to give some satisfaction to these aspirations was due to Lord Ripon, who was sent out as Viceroy by Gladstone in 1880. For this reason he is still regarded by most Indians as the best of all the Viceroys. He established representative municipalities in the towns, and District Boards in the rural districts, expressly as a means of enabling Indians to train themselves in

self-government. He revised the educational system, encouraging the growth of schools and colleges under Indian management by Government grants; Government funds had previously been spent upon Government schools and colleges. The result was an enormous increase in the number of institutions of Western learning, many of them very poorly equipped. The number of English-speaking Indians was multiplied many times in the next twenty years, and this increased the demand for self-government. A controversy which arose over another of Lord Ripon's measures also contributed to strengthen the nationalist movement. He had framed an Act (known as the Ilbert Act) whereby Indian magistrates were empowered to try cases in which Europeans were concerned. This proposal aroused such an outcry among the Europeans in India that it had to be withdrawn. Its withdrawal seemed like a slur upon Indian judges, and led to vigorous protests.

Indian National Congress.—In 1885, the year after Ripon's return, the Indian National Congress was founded, at first as a purely Hindu organisation. Meeting once a year, it grew steadily bolder in its demand that the representative institutions which were conferred on all the British colonies should not be denied to India. Other movements also, which cannot here be discussed, contributed to strengthen the nationalist movement. Government, however, made no concession to it, except that in 1892 a small elected element, chosen by very limited constituencies, was added to the Legislative Councils of the various provinces; but it was completely outnumbered by official nominees. The real control over the government remained in the hands of the highly competent and devoted bureaucracy of the Indian Civil Service, which included in its higher branches only a small number of Indians; and the final control rested with the British Government and Parliament.

Lord Curzon.—This system reached its culminating point of efficiency under Lord Curzon, Viceroy from 1899 to 1905. In many spheres he did splendid work; he overhauled and tautened every department of government; and the superb Durbar of the Princes and Peoples of India which he held in 1903 to celebrate the accession of Edward VII as king-emperor marked perhaps the highest point of British power. But his reign also saw a formidable growth of anti-British agitation. Already, in the 'nineties, there had been a great deal of revolutionary talk in the vernacular Press, especially among the Bengalis of Calcutta and among the Marathas of

Poona; in 1896, when there was an outbreak of plague, two British officials were murdered at Poona, and this was the beginning of a campaign of assassination which was to reach serious dimensions. Two acts of Lord Curzon added fuel to the flame. He carried out a drastic reform of the university system, taking much fuller powers of control for government than had been exercised since Ripon's time. Reform was badly needed, but it was done in the wrong way, and it touched the educated class at the most tender spot. More important, he divided the unwieldy province of Bengal (where nationalism was strongest) into two provinces (1905).* The Partition of Bengal aroused a frenzy of opposition. A *swadeshi* movement, for the boycott of British goods, was started. More serious, a secret murder conspiracy was organised in Bengal. It began in 1908, after Lord Curzon had returned to England. It was mainly aimed at the Indian police. It was very difficult to deal with, because witnesses refused to give evidence for fear of the consequences. This Bengal movement was still going on when the Great War broke out in 1914. The teaching of an excitable Maratha journalist named Tilak created a ferment also in Bombay, and in 1907 there was a dangerous movement in the Punjab.

Strength of Nationalism.—This movement of violence was confined to a very small number of men—not more than two or three hundred in Bengal. But it was very difficult to deal with, and it was causing dangerous unrest. Unquestionably one of the reasons for the rising tide of nationalist feeling was the victory which Japan won over Russia in 1904—a victory which seemed to show that an Eastern people could achieve a degree of efficiency equal to that of any Western nation, and could face successfully the most powerful of Western empires. The influence of the Russo-Japanese War was felt, indeed, throughout the non-European world. But the essential thing was that the growing educated class of India was becoming more and more determined to achieve some sort of self-government.

The Morley-Minto Reforms.—The Liberal Government which came into power in Britain in December 1905—just after Lord Curzon's retirement—recognised this. It made no compromise with violence. But in 1909 Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, introduced profound modifications in the system of Indian government. In all the Provincial Councils an elected majority was

* School Atlas, Plate 54*a*.

introduced. In the Viceroy's Legislative Council (which deals with the affairs of India as a whole) a representative element, though not a majority, was introduced. An Indian member was added to the Viceroy's small executive council or cabinet, and two Indian members were added to the Secretary of State's Council in London. In the provincial governments, at any rate, this was the establishment of representative, though not of responsible, government. But precisely for that reason, it did not put a stop to the agitation ; on the contrary, it rather increased it, since the sole function given to the new councillors was that of criticising the Government.

Dangerous Unrest.—When the crisis of 1914 arrived, therefore, India seemed to be in a turmoil : a vigorous constitutional agitation was going on, and a murder-conspiracy was still afoot in Bengal. What was more natural than the expectation that under the strain of war India would break into revolt, and that the British colossus would fall to pieces ? But these anticipations left out of account the facts that the vast mass of the Indian peoples were wholly unaffected by political agitation ; that the Indian princes disliked it ; that only a handful of fanatics were concerned in the conspiracy of violence ; and that the great majority of the educated Indians who were demanding political emancipation were in fact convinced that the maintenance of the connection between India and Britain alone offered any hope of the achievement of their aims.

6. Growth of Imperial Unity

Thus in every part of the British Empire the nationalist spirit was actively at work. There was no central compulsive power to hold the Empire together ; and therefore it appeared to foreign observers that it was bound to break asunder as soon as it was attacked. The very reverse was the case : only the menace of external peril was needed to still most of the discords, and to prove that a free partnership was stronger than a unity imposed by force. The unrest in the various members of the Empire, and in the mother-country itself, were the growing-pains of freedom.

Imperial Conferences.—During this period, however, a considerable advance had been made in the organisation of consultation between the members of the Empire. These consultations had no power to enforce their decisions, but they made it possible for the various States to act together, and to understand one another's point

of view. This process of consultation began with the Colonial Conferences of 1887, 1897, and 1902 ; there was also a conference at Ottawa in 1894. These were meetings of imperial statesmen who happened to be in London for the great ceremonial occasions of the two Jubilees and the Coronation of Edward VII. A change was made under the auspices of the new Government which came into office in 1905. It summoned two conferences in 1907 and 1911. But they were called Imperial, not Colonial, Conferences. They were specially summoned, and had a full agenda. In 1907 it was decided that conferences should be held every four years, and that there should be a permanent secretariat. Moreover, they discussed far more important business than their predecessors. They were taken into the fullest confidence on foreign policy. They played a vitally important part in working out the plans of imperial defence, and making close co-operation possible in the event of war. In 1909 and 1910 the Dominions undertook systematic defence programmes which resulted from these consultations. They had earlier made contributions towards the Navy. Australia and Canada began to create local navies of their own, but in close co-operation with the Royal Navy.

"Commonwealth of Nations." — The character of the British Empire was changing. It had ceased to be an Empire in the strict sense of the term, and had become, in Campbell-Bannerman's phrase, "a Commonwealth of Nations" : not a solid, unitary State, but a planetary system of States, each revolving in its own orbit, yet all held in their places by a nice balance between the centrifugal force of nationalism and the centripetal force of imperial patriotism. Whether war could disturb this balance was soon to be seen.

CHAPTER LI

SOCIAL REFORM AND POLITICAL CRISIS (1906–1914)

1. The Parliament of 1906–1910

A Period of Strain.—Britain has never passed through a period of greater strain and more intense political activity than in the nine years before the outbreak of the Great War. While the situation

in Europe (which will be discussed in the next chapter) was becoming more and more difficult, and the menace of world-war overhung the nation, and while the problems of imperial government surveyed in the last chapter were assuming an increasing importance, at home a programme of social and political change was being carried out which aroused acute controversy ; labour conflicts attained an intensity never before known ; respect for law seemed to be breaking down ; and Ireland was brought to the very verge of civil war. It was in these circumstances that the British peoples entered upon the most terrible ordeal of their history, and both at home and abroad there were many who doubted whether they would stand the strain. The existence of this belief in Europe perhaps contributed to precipitate the war.

The Election of 1906.—The General Election of 1906 was the most sensational in the history of parliamentary government. The Conservative party lost most of its leaders, and was reduced to 157, while 377 Liberals were returned. The usual solid block of 85 Irish Nationalists gave steady support to the Liberals. But the most significant feature of the election was the return of 51 members of the new Labour party. Yet the Liberals had a clear majority of more than 80 over all other parties combined ; and in conjunction with their allies they had a majority of three to one over the Conservatives. It was very clear that the country was resolved upon a great change of policy. On the other hand, the House of Lords showed a permanent and overwhelming Conservative majority. It could, if it dared, reduce the great majority of the House of Commons to impotence. This, from the first, made a constitutional conflict between the two Houses inevitable.

The Liberal Ministry.—The Liberals had been deeply divided and disheartened during the previous period. One section of them, known as the Liberal Imperialists, and including Lord Rosebery, Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Haldane, had supported the South African War, while another section, including Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. John Morley, and a rising young Welshman, Mr. Lloyd George, had violently denounced it. But common opposition to Chamberlain's Tariff Reform campaign had drawn them together again, and they formed a very powerful ministry under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, which included some recruits from the broken Conservative party, notably Mr. Winston Churchill, a son of Lord Randolph. In 1908 Campbell-

Bannerman died, and his place was taken by Mr. Asquith, a man of great intellectual power and imperturbable serenity.

Army Reform.—The legislative work of this Government was so many-sided that it is best to deal with it by subjects, rather than in chronological order. In view of the coming war, first place must be given to the remarkable military reorganisation which it carried out, under the direction of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Haldane, as Secretary of State for War. The South African War had shown that the British army needed drastic reorganisation. Several attempted reforms since the war had led to no useful results. It would have taken months to send any large army abroad, and the army as a whole was not organised for this purpose. Haldane, in the first place, reconstituted the Regular Army as an Expeditionary Force, organised into Army Corps and Divisions, each with their proper complements of cavalry and artillery, medical and service corps. The result was that, when the need came, the most perfectly equipped and trained army that Britain had ever put into the field was transferred to France in a few days. It was small in comparison with the conscript armies of the Continent, but Britain was a sea-power, and had never contemplated maintaining an army on the Continental scale. Behind the Expeditionary Force, Haldane reconstituted the Volunteers as a Territorial Army, organised in proper units, with the necessary equipment, and provided with a much improved system of training. The "Territorials" were designed for home defence; but they were able to strengthen the army in France in the first winter of the war, when they saved the situation. In every university and great school Haldane instituted Officers' Training Corps: without the reserve of partially trained officers thus created, the rapid expansion of the army in war-time would probably have been impossible. He also equipped Britain, for the first time, with a General Staff. With these reforms was linked a corresponding reorganisation of the military system in the Dominions. These reforms, which were carried out between 1906 and 1912, alone made it possible for Britain to play her part in the war.

Old Measures Revived.—A part of the time of this Parliament was spent upon old projects of reform. Although the full scheme of Irish Home Rule was not introduced, the Irish university problem, tackled by Gladstone in 1871, was solved by the creation of two new universities, in Dublin and Belfast. A measure of Welsh Disestablishment was introduced, but rejected by the House of

Lords. A Licensing Bill was treated in the same way. The summary rejection of measures sent forward by overwhelming majorities from the House of Commons aroused great anger, and made a constitutional struggle inevitable; but the Government waited for a more popular issue.

The Trade Disputes Act.—One of the earliest, and one of the most controversial, of this Government's proposals was the Trade Disputes Act of 1906. A recent judgment in the courts (the Taff Vale judgment) had made trade unions liable for actions done by their members during strikes, and for any wrong suffered as a result of a strike. If the law had remained in this form, strike action would have been impossible; and as the threat of withholding labour is the basis of the trade union's negotiating power, the unions would have been reduced to impotence. The Act of 1906 exempted the trade unions from liability for actions of this kind. It may thus be said to have placed them in a privileged position. Conservatives denounced this as a vicious Act; but the House of Lords did not venture to reject it. The result was a very rapid increase in the membership of the trade unions; and the serious strikes of the next few years were by many people attributed to this Act.

The Political Levy.—A second Act affecting the trade unions came some years later. For many years some of the trade unions had devoted a part of their funds to paying the expenses of their members who became candidates for Parliament. In 1909 the courts decided, in the Osborne judgment, that trade union funds could not legally be used in this way. This would have deprived the Labour party of its financial resources. As it seemed on all grounds desirable that trade unionists should sit in the House of Commons, where so many matters affecting them were discussed, an Act was passed (1913) empowering any trade union, if its members so decided, to raise a special levy for political purposes, provided that any member who did not wish to pay should have the right to claim exemption. These two Acts were the foundations of the industrial and political power of the trade unions, and turned them into one of the strongest forces in the State.

Payment of Members.—In 1911 the position of working-class members was further strengthened when Payment of Members—long since demanded by the Chartists—was carried, and every member of Parliament received £400 a year. Until that date, membership of the House of Commons had been reserved for those

who were rich enough to be able to give their time, and to meet the heavy expenses which membership entails.

But the main work of this ministry was a remarkable series of measures of social reconstruction, more far-reaching than anything that had yet been undertaken in Britain, or, indeed, in any European country.

Protection of Children.—In the first place, there were a number of measures for the protection of children. The Provision of Meals Act (1906) enabled education authorities to feed children who came to school hungry ; and, lest this should impair the responsibilities of their parents, the authorities were empowered to recover the cost from any parents whose means were sufficient. By the Medical Inspection Act (1907) all the children in the nation's schools were brought under medical supervision. And by the Children's Act (1908) many forms of protection for children were enacted, and a special system of jurisdiction and punishment was set up for juvenile criminals, so as to withdraw them from the pernicious influence of the police court and the gaol.

Old-Age Pensions.—The aged poor next received attention. In 1908 a system of old-age pensions was created, under which every person over seventy whose income was less than a certain very modest sum could claim a weekly pension of five shillings, payable at the post-office. The sum was small ; but the immense number of people who were entitled to claim it was a revelation of the mass of unrelieved poverty which existed in the country ; and, small as it was, it enabled thousands of poor folk to live in self-respect with their families, without being driven to the harsh charity of the Poor Law.

Housing and Town-Planning.—An attack upon the unwholesome and sordid conditions which existed in British towns was made possible by the Housing and Town-Planning Act (1909), which very greatly enlarged the powers and duties of municipalities in regard to the demolition of unhealthy houses and the construction of healthy ones for the mass of the people. The Act also introduced a new idea in English legislation, by imposing upon municipalities the duty of working out sound plans for the future development of their towns, and of requiring that landowners and builders should follow these plans. For some time there had been in Britain a movement for the creation of garden cities and garden suburbs, and in some cases admirable results had been obtained by buying up land at a low value and then using for public purposes the increased value

which it obtained as soon as houses and shops were planted upon it. The Town-Planning Act made possible the gradual reconstruction of British towns on these healthy lines. But before this could be done, it was held to be necessary to give to public authorities the power to annex the increased values given to land by public improvements instead of letting them pass into private hands. This idea had already been applied in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. But it gave rise to a very acrimonious controversy as to the justice and also as to the probable results of such interference with the existing rights of landowners. In the Land Values (Scotland) Bill of 1907 an experiment in this direction was made ; this was only the beginning of a very vigorous and angry discussion which reached its height two years later, on the Budget of 1909.

Small Holdings.—A serious attempt was also made to revive British agriculture and to stimulate hope and ambition among the peasantry by the Small Holdings Act of 1907, which empowered county councils to acquire land by compulsory purchase, and to let it out in small holdings and allotments. The energy with which this Act was applied depended upon the county councils. Some did practically nothing. But in those counties, such as Cambridgeshire, where the new function was taken seriously, a large number of small holdings were created, and a beginning was made in recreating the class of small farmers which had largely been destroyed by the enclosure movement. This, however, was only a beginning. The Government had in view far more sweeping proposals when the war came to interrupt their work.

Industrial Reforms.—There was also a very important series of measures affecting industry. Under an Act of 1906 a Census of Production was carried out. It provided, for the first time, adequate information about the actual facts of industry. In the same year a *Workmen's Compensation* Act extended to all trades the right to compensation which had been applied to a few trades in 1897. In 1908 the hours of labour in coal-mines were limited to eight a day ; and in 1910 the hours and conditions of work in shops were defined by law.

Trade Boards.—But the most novel and important departure in this sphere was provided by the Sweated Industries Act of 1909. In certain industries where wages were exceptionally low, and where no adequate trade union organisation existed for the protection of the

workers, the State undertook the function of fixing a legal minimum wage. For this purpose Trade Boards were to be instituted in each industry concerned. They were to consist of equal numbers of employers and workpeople, with a neutral element, all to be appointed by the Board of Trade. The wage-rates which they defined, after due consideration, were to be laid on the table of the House of Commons, and thereafter were to be enforced by the courts of law; inspectors were appointed to see that these rates were paid. In the first instance only seven trades, covering half a million workers, were brought under the scheme; but it has since been greatly expanded. The immediate result was a great improvement in the conditions of the workers concerned. Experience seems to show that, when it is intelligently used, the system is not bad for trade; on the contrary, it stimulates employers to greater efficiency.

Labour Exchanges.—Finally, in 1909, a network of Labour Exchanges was set up in every part of the country, in order to help men to find jobs, and employers to find the workmen they needed. This was the necessary preparation for dealing with the immense problem of unemployment, which the Government had next resolved to tackle.

Differential Taxation.—All these reforms involved a very great enlargement of the functions of the State, and consequently a great increase in the number of public officials. This was regarded by many with profound misgiving, and the growth of "bureaucracy" was the subject of many criticisms. The new social policy also involved a great outlay of public money, and rendered necessary large changes in public finance. In the first three Budgets of this Government, Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, succeeded not only in substantially reducing indirect taxation, but also in paying off a large proportion of the debt incurred during the South African War. In doing so he introduced two significant changes. He levied a higher rate of income tax on "unearned" income—that is, income from investments—than on "earned" income, that is, payment for work done. He also increased substantially the duties paid on estates at death. Thus the wealthier section of the community were largely made to pay for the cost of social reforms which mainly benefited the poorer members of the community.

The Budget of 1909.—In the Budget of 1909 Mr. Lloyd George, who had succeeded Mr. Asquith at the Exchequer, went still farther in this direction, levying upon all large incomes a super-

tax over and above the ordinary rate of income tax. But this was only one aspect of this remarkable Budget, the most revolutionary of modern times. It was linked up with a whole programme of new social legislation, for which it was to find the means, and some part of which was embodied in the Budget itself. The part of these proposals which aroused the bitterest controversy was a series of new taxes proposed to be levied on land. All the land in the country was to be valued, and during the next few years the valuers were very busy. A small tax was to be levied on the capital value of the land (apart from the buildings on it), and a further tax, called "increment duty," was proposed as a means of securing for the community a share of all increases of value that were due, not to the enterprise of the owner, but to the presence of a large population. There was an extraordinarily fierce controversy over these proposals, in the course of which the taxes were whittled down until they amounted to very little. On the one hand, the landowning class were denounced for taking toll of the nation's industry, and for holding up land needed for national expansion in order to get ransom prices. On the other hand, the supporters of the scheme were denounced as revolutionaries who were upsetting the very foundations of the nation's economic life.

Rejection of the Budget.—Passions ran so high that the House of Lords, defying the constitutional usage of two centuries, actually rejected the Budget. In doing so they practically claimed the right of dismissing a ministry, since no ministry can carry on government if its budget is rejected. At the very least, they were claiming the power of forcing a dissolution of Parliament. Thus was raised the largest and most exciting constitutional controversy since 1832.

2. Constitutional Conflict (1910–1914)

The Conflicts of 1910.—The year 1910 was a year of intense political excitement. In January there was a general election on the issues raised by the House of Lords. But far deeper questions were raised. There were proposals for reconstructing the House of Lords, for revising its powers, or for abolishing it. The great issues of national finance and social reorganisation were also raised. The Tariff Reform controversy was revived. And meanwhile the foreign situation was becoming grave, and the Government was charged with neglecting the Navy. The election resulted in a

great reduction of Liberal strength : Liberals and Conservatives were practically equal, and the Irish Nationalists and the Labour Party held the balance. But these parties were not less determined than the Liberals to cut down the powers of the House of Lords. The rejected Budget had to be carried ; and the Government was definitely committed to a scheme for limiting the powers of the House of Lords and revising its composition. An attempt to reach a settlement by agreement in a conference of party leaders failed. King Edward VII died during the controversy, and a second election, which gave very much the same result, was held at the end of the year.

The Parliament Bill.—In 1911 the Parliament Bill was introduced. It proposed to reduce the duration of Parliament to five years, and to deprive the House of Lords of the power of rejecting or altering any Bills certified by the Speaker of the House of Commons as Money Bills ; in the case of other Bills the Lords might reject twice, but on a Bill being sent up for a third time it was to be submitted for the royal assent. There were furious and bitter debates, with scenes of violence, before the Bill passed the House of Commons. A majority in the Lords would have liked to reject it. But it was known that King George V had agreed, if necessary, to create four hundred peers in order to secure the passage of the Bill, and in face of this possibility the Lords reluctantly gave way. The House of Lords by this Act definitely became a subordinate body. It could no longer destroy measures supported by a substantial majority. On the other hand, it could compel a majority in the Commons from which it differed to waste the time of Parliament and the patience of the electors by passing every important measure through all its stages three times ; and it could make controversial legislation impossible in the last two years of a five years' Parliament. The Government had undertaken to introduce a supplementary measure dealing with the constitution of the Second Chamber. It never did so.

National Development.—During and after the constitutional discussion, a further series of economic and social changes were carried. A Development Commission, with large funds, was set up to carry out projects of national development not likely to be undertaken by private enterprise. A Road Board was established to reconstruct the road system of the country in view of the coming of motor traffic : it was financed by special taxes levied on motor-cars.

Social Insurance.—The most important measures of this period, however, and perhaps the most important new social devices introduced by this Government, were two immense schemes of social insurance, whereby provision was made, on an insurance basis, for safeguarding working people against those risks of life in an industrial society against which it was impossible for them to provide out of their own resources. The chief of these were sickness and unemployment. The National Health Insurance scheme provided medical attendance and medicines, and allowances during a period of disability, for all insured persons, and also maternity benefits for their wives; the funds being found by contributions from employers, employees, and the State. The scheme involved very complicated arrangements with doctors and chemists and with the friendly societies which undertook to administer it. The Unemployment Insurance scheme, which was confined at first to a few of the greater trades in which unemployment was most prevalent, similarly provided out-of-work pay during periods of involuntary unemployment. It was administered through the Labour Exchanges and the Trade Unions. These far-reaching schemes aroused furious controversy. They represented a new departure in State action. They have since become an essential part of the social structure, and the unemployment scheme has been extended until it covers almost the whole of the working population.

The Third Home Rule Bill.—The destruction of the Lords' Veto made it practicable to introduce two measures which the Lords had repeatedly rejected—Irish Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment. Both aroused very bitter controversy, which seemed interminable because the whole process had to be gone through three times. As the time came near for the final passage of the Home Rule Bill, the Ulster Protestants, realising that the House of Lords was no longer able to protect them, prepared to offer armed resistance. Led by an eminent lawyer, Sir Edward Carson, they organised volunteer corps, smuggled large supplies of arms into the country from abroad, and even set up a Provisional Government. The Nationalists, as well as the Ulster men, began to drill. The more extreme party in Catholic Ireland, "Sinn Fein," was believed to be in relations with Germany. In the spring of 1914, civil war seemed to be at hand. Even the army, at the Curragh camp in Ireland, threatened to mutiny, many of the officers being determined to refuse duty if they were ordered to serve against Ulster. An

attempt to reach a compromise was made in a conference of the political leaders on both sides, summoned by the king. This was on the very eve of war, when it was known to be imminent ; but even this knowledge did not bring agreement. This was the situation at the moment when the war-cloud burst.

3. Industrial and Social Unrest

Great Strikes. — During these years of intense political activity and growing political strife, Britain was also passing through a series of labour disputes of unprecedented seriousness. In the eight years preceding 1906, the average number of days lost through industrial disputes in each year was four million ; but in the eight years from 1906 to 1914 the figure rose to eleven million. Not only this, but the disputes were of a gravity unknown before, and they were especially serious in industries which were essential to the nation's life, industries the dislocation of which affected the whole sphere of industry, notably coal-mining and the railways. There were prolonged stoppages in the mines, which were only temporarily cured, in 1912, by the hurried enactment of a minimum wage for three years. In 1911 there was an almost complete stoppage of railway transport, and, in some ports, of the loading and unloading of ships. The strike-fever was in that year so virulent that children began to strike against going to school. This profound industrial unrest, which seemed to be intensified rather than alleviated by the sweeping reforms introduced into Parliament, appeared to many observers to be an even graver national malady than the acrimony of politics.

Causes of Unrest.—The causes of this industrial unrest were clear enough. In the first place, the steady rise in the real value of wages which had gone on uninterruptedly from 1846 to the end of the nineteenth century, had been followed first by stagnation and then, in some trades, by a fall. In some trades, and notably on the railways, the rates of wages were disgracefully low—insufficient to provide a decent livelihood. The growing strength and activity of the trade unions had been quite unable to prevent this, because it was due to the fact that British industry was, relatively to that of other countries, less efficient than it had been in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the trade unions were now so strong, and their membership had so vastly increased, that it seemed as if they ought to be able

to enforce their demands. Meanwhile, the preaching of extreme and destructive forms of Socialist doctrine was growing very rapidly. Karl Marx's doctrine of the Class War, in its crudest form, and the French doctrine of Syndicalism, which taught that the workers in each industry ought to control it and take its proceeds, and that they could obtain this control by "direct action" through the strike weapon, were both being more widely disseminated than ever before, and had not yet been subjected to effective criticism. They had very little influence among the great mass of workmen, and the leaders of the greater trade unions were seldom affected by them. But they influenced the younger, more energetic and more vocal among the workers.

Diminished Respect for Law.—Even this was not the end of the perturbing features in the condition of Britain. There seemed to be a general diminution of that law-abidingness which was supposed to be a British quality, and of that readiness to accept the decision of the majority until it could be altered which is the first condition of the successful working of democracy. The opponents of the Education Act of 1902 were still offering "passive resistance" to its provisions, and refusing to pay their rates because they disapproved of the purposes for which they were to be spent. The opponents of Home Rule were ready to resist it by arms. The advocates of women's suffrage, who were immensely active throughout the period, were not content with the ordinary methods of persuasion, but strove to prove their fitness for government by interrupting meetings, smashing shop windows, chaining themselves to railings, burning down churches and houses, slashing knives through pictures, and refusing food when imprisoned for disorderly conduct. To many it seemed that the foundations of society were being loosened.

But the moment the tocsin of war clanged, these discords almost wholly ceased. The nation, and the whole British Empire, forgot their disputes and sprang to attention. The truth was that in these years a profound and searching examination of the very foundations of the social and political order had begun. It was bound to arouse deep feeling. It was prematurely interrupted by the call to war. But when that call came, it was seen that the mettle of the people was unimpaired. We have next to see how and why that call came.

CHAPTER LII

THE COMING OF THE GREAT WAR (1904–1914)

1. Balance of Power

Danger-points.—Europe and the world were in a very unhealthy condition at the beginning of the twentieth century.* There were many danger-points where war might at any moment break out. France was still sore about the loss of Alsace and Lorraine. The Balkan Peninsula was in a state of constant unrest. The discordant peoples of the Austrian Empire were on bad terms with one another, and that composite empire was only held together by the unwelcome control which the ruling races of Germans and Magyars enforced upon the subject peoples—Czechs, Croats, Serbs, Poles, and Rumanians. The tyranny of the Russian despotism was becoming intolerable. The world had been rapidly partitioned among the Great Powers, whose interests clashed with one another in every part of the earth. But what made all these things doubly dangerous was that the Great Powers of Europe were divided into two rival alliances, armed to the teeth, and watching one another. This meant that if any dispute broke out which involved any of them, a world-war must follow.

Germany.—This division into two groups was a recent thing, to which there had been no parallel in earlier history. It was due to the swift rise of the power of Germany. Since the middle of the nineteenth century Germany had become indubitably the greatest power in Europe. Her army was the most perfect military machine that had ever existed. Her people were formidable by reason of their industry, knowledge and skill. With rapid strides she had made herself one of the greatest manufacturing and trading Powers in the world. She aimed at creating for herself an empire corresponding with the greatness of her European position. But, starting late, she had not got her fair share of world dominion, and she was eager to seize every opportunity of increasing it. She was ruled by a military caste whose traditions bade them trust to force for the achievement of their ends, and the saner commercial interests had not yet won great

* For Europe in 1914, see School Atlas, Plate 20.

influence in her government. She was always conscious of her dangerous position, with long frontiers in the heart of Europe, faced by formidable powers on either side. She had striven to make herself secure by creating an alliance with Austria and Italy. But this involved her in the obligation of defending the precarious power of the Austrian Empire, which was threatened by nationalist movements. She had also buttressed her power by building up a strong influence over Turkey, and over three of the four main Balkan States: Rumania and Bulgaria both had German kings, and the king of Greece had married the Kaiser's sister; only Serbia was not brought into this group of alliances, and Serbia was bitterly anti-Austrian. But the power of Germany in Turkey and the Balkans aroused the jealousy of Russia, with whom Bismarck had always been careful to maintain friendly relations.

The Triple Entente.—It was the masterful policy which Germany was pursuing which led to the formation, in the 'nineties, of an alliance between France and Russia. Both powers felt themselves endangered. But as soon as they came together, the nightmare of "encirclement" began to prey upon the mind of Germany. It was used by her military caste as a reason for further armaments; and these were promptly answered by armaments on the other side. Finally, Germany had resolved that if she was to have a position as a great world-power, she must possess not only a great army but a great fleet to secure her interests in all parts of the world. She must "wield the trident." From 1900 onwards she was building up a powerful fleet with determined energy. This aroused the fears of Britain, who had to build against her; and it led to the entente with France in 1904. During the next ten years the restless eagerness of Germany and her allies to strengthen their position in the world kept the other powers in a state of alarm. They were drawn into closer relations with one another. And the more they acted together, the deeper grew Germany's fears of "encirclement." The vicious circle could not be broken. Europe moved from crisis to crisis, and with each crisis the menace became graver. As the motion of a river seems to become swifter and fiercer when it draws near to a cataract, so, year by year, the situation became more critical as the cataclysm drew nearer.

British Policy.—British statesmanship was aware of the danger. Its supreme aim was the maintenance of peace; but it also had to think of the security of the British Empire should war

come. To reconcile these needs was not easy; it was like walking the tight-rope; and Sir Edward Grey, who was Foreign Secretary during these difficult years, had a terribly hard task. As German policy seemed to be the chief disturbing factor, Britain found herself steadily drawn into closer association with France and Russia in the difficult diplomacy of these years, and this involved her in moral obligation towards them. On the other hand, she carefully abstained from anything in the nature of a formal alliance with France and Russia; she tried, with increasing difficulty, to stand aloof; she strove to conjure away any fears which Germany might feel, and to reach if possible an agreement with Germany like those she had reached with France and Russia. The best way to realise the difficulty of the period is to follow the development of the crisis year by year, beginning with the Franco-British entente of 1904.

2. The Successive Crises of 1905–1913

The Disablement of Russia.—No sooner had Britain and France removed their outstanding differences than war broke out between Russia and Japan. The Anglo-Japanese alliance prevented any European intervention; and Japan astonished the world by inflicting a crushing defeat upon Russia, both on land and sea. Next year, 1905, a dangerous revolution broke out in Russia. The legend of Russian invincibility was broken. For some years Russia could almost be counted out of European politics, and this fact profoundly affected the whole course of events.

First Morocco Crisis.—In 1905 Germany suddenly interfered in Morocco. That kingdom was in a state of anarchy. It lay next to the French colony of Algeria. France had for some years been engaged in a process of "peaceful penetration." In the entente of 1904 Britain had recognised France's prior right to intervene in Morocco. The Kaiser, knowing that France's ally Russia was disabled, suddenly landed at Tangier and asserted the independence of Morocco. There was a momentary danger of war, and French military representatives consulted with British officers as to the steps that should be taken if war came and Britain was involved. They discovered that the British army could not be mobilised in time to be of use; and this directly influenced the army-reform policy of Haldane. Eventually the question was referred to a European conference, which met at Algeçiras in Spain (1906). It declared

Morocco independent, but recognised the position of France in that country. This was regarded as a diplomatic defeat for Germany. This first crisis had been staved off.

The Anglo-Russian Entente.—In 1907, largely through the mediation of France, Britain came to an agreement with Russia. Like the entente of 1904, this agreement was in no sense an alliance, but a clearing up of outstanding difficulties, notably in Persia and in Tibet. But it rendered diplomatic co-operation easier. It also alarmed Germany, who saw herself being "encircled"; and when King Edward VII visited the Tsar at Reval, he was regarded as the villain of the plot. In the same year the second Hague Conference was held, in the hope of persuading the Great Powers to stop the race of armaments. All the world wanted peace. Since 1904 scores of arbitration treaties had been signed between various nations. The Hague Conference tried to extend the system of arbitration. It failed, largely because of the obstinate opposition of Germany. Meanwhile, Britain had made an honest attempt to dissipate German fears, and to persuade Germany to slow down the rate of naval construction. As a guarantee of good faith, Britain herself slowed down her rate of construction, and the Government was denounced for endangering her naval strength. But Germany made no response; she rather intensified her naval energy.

Austria and Serbia.—In 1908 a revolution broke out in Turkey. For a time the German influence at Constantinople was shaken; but it was soon restored. Austria seized the occasion to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina, which she had administered since 1878. These provinces were inhabited by Serbs, and Serbia, who had hoped to incorporate them, was stirred by a passion of anti-Austrian feeling, and appealed to Russia for aid. Germany declared strongly on the side of Austria. War was very near; but Russia had not recovered from her troubles, and when Sir Edward Grey made it clear that Britain would take no part in a war on such an issue, Russia and Serbia had to submit to humiliation. Austria, thinking that the time had come to crush Serbia, invented forged evidence to justify a war. But Germany made her hold her hand—as she failed to do in 1914, when a similar quarrel between Austria and Serbia precipitated the Great War. In this episode the Central Powers unquestionably scored a victory, and strengthened their influence in the Balkan States.

The Dreadnought.—In 1909 a strong agitation arose in

Britain regarding the naval situation, and the Government was fiercely attacked by the Conservative opposition. Recognising that the overtures to Germany had failed, the Government undertook an enlarged programme of naval construction. But the situation had meanwhile been affected by a new factor. A new type of battleship, the *Dreadnought*, had been launched. This type was too large to pass through the Kiel Canal, whereby Germany planned to pass her warships to and fro between the North Sea and the Baltic. Germany began to widen the Kiel Canal. It was probable that she would, if possible, avoid a general war before this work was finished. It was finished in June 1914.

Italo-Turkish War.—1910 was a year of uneasy quiet. But in 1911 a double crisis came. Italy seized Tripoli, which was part of the Turkish Empire, and was involved in war with Turkey. This for a time weakened German influence at Constantinople, because Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance. It also strained the Triple Alliance itself. Germany began to fear, what actually came about, that she would not be able to count upon the support of Italy if war should come.

Second Morocco Crisis.—More dangerous was the outbreak of a new phase of the Morocco problem. France had taken military action in Morocco, and was obviously working towards control of the country. Germany asserted that this was a breach of the Algeçiras agreement. Whether it was or not does not here concern us. Germany did not appeal to the Powers concerned in the agreement. She sent a warship to Agadir, and made it plain that the matter must be settled between her and France. Britain thereupon announced, through a speech delivered by Mr. Lloyd George, that she intended to be consulted. For a time war was very near. But it was averted by an agreement between France and Germany, whereby France bought Germany's acquiescence in her action in Morocco by ceding some territory in Central Africa. Germany regarded herself, however, as having suffered a diplomatic defeat.

Military Consultations.—During the crisis of 1911 British and French military experts again took counsel as to the policy to be adopted if the two Powers were involved in war. Lest this should be regarded as committing Britain, formal letters were exchanged between Sir Edward Grey and the French ambassador which made it clear that Britain retained full freedom of action. While she was anxious to be ready if war should come, she was

determined not to be dragged into the war at the heels of France or Russia.

Military Preparations.—From 1911, onwards until the war, there was feverish military preparation on both sides. Germany passed an Army Act to enlarge her forces in 1911 ; a second Army Act followed in 1912, and a third in 1913, and a levy on capital was raised to meet the costs involved. France imposed an extra year of military service upon all her manhood. Russia built military railways to transport her troops to the frontier. Even Belgium, whose neutrality was guaranteed, adopted compulsory military service in a secret session of Parliament in 1913. In 1912 Britain made a naval arrangement with France under which the main strength of the British fleet was concentrated in the North Sea, while the French fleet was concentrated in the Mediterranean. This imposed upon Britain an honourable obligation to defend the Channel coast of France if it should be attacked.

British Efforts for Peace.—Evidently war was expected and was being prepared, as early as 1912. But Britain did not abandon hope of reaching some understanding with Germany. In 1912 Lord Haldane was sent to Berlin to convey a formal assurance from the Cabinet that Britain had not made, and would not make, any agreement with any other Power for action against Germany ; and to urge that, in view of this, an agreement for mutual reduction of naval armaments should be made. In reply, Germany suggested that Britain should pledge herself to neutrality in the event of a European war. Such a pledge could not, of course, possibly be given. Even so, Britain did not give up the endeavour to ease the strain. Sir Edward Grey tried to reach an agreement with the German ambassador on colonial questions, similar to the earlier agreements with France and Russia. An agreement was reached, and a treaty was drafted. According to one of the greatest colonial enthusiasts in Germany, it gave to her everything she could reasonably expect. It was ready for signature in the summer of 1914. But it was held up, because the German Chancellor insisted that it must not be made public, while Sir Edward Grey explained that it must be submitted to Parliament before ratification.

The Balkan Wars.—Meanwhile, in 1912, the centre of interest was transferred to the Balkans. Three of the Balkan States —Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece—formed a League against Turkey, completely defeated her, and threatened Constantinople. The

Balkan League had agreed as to the way in which the conquered territories should be divided. The maintenance of their alliance would have meant peace in the Balkans, and the disappearance of the Turk from Europe. But Austria refused to allow Serbia to have the territories which had been assigned to her, and threatened war. A conference was held in London, under the presidency of Sir Edward Grey, and the crisis was averted. But Serbia was recompensed for the lands which Austria would not let her take by lands taken from Bulgaria's share. Bulgaria, perhaps stimulated by Austria, refused to accept this settlement. A second Balkan war was waged in 1913, when Bulgaria was beaten by Serbia, Greece, and Rumania. Once more Austria threatened to attack Serbia ; once more Germany held her back. But the result of this miserable strife was that the promising Balkan League was broken. Bulgaria, deeply angered, made friends with Turkey. This situation had a profound influence upon the course of the Great War.

3. The Outbreak of the Great War

The Murder of Sarajevo.—In the spring of 1914 the international horizon seemed to be clearer than it had been for some time. Peace had been restored in the Balkans, and the colonial agreement between Germany and Britain was nearly complete. Suddenly, in June, came terrible news. The Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austrian Empire, was murdered at Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. The murderer was an Austrian subject, but of Serb race. Austria had threatened, three times within the previous five years, to attack Serbia, because Serbia was the source of nationalist movements among Austria's Slav subjects. She assumed, rightly or wrongly, but without giving Serbia any opportunity of being heard, that Serbia was concerned in the murder ; and after a month's delay launched a terrific ultimatum which Serbia could not accept without abandoning all pretence to be an independent State.

Fevered Negotiations.—The crisis had come. If Austria attacked Serbia, Russia would be bound to come to her aid ; Germany was bound to aid Austria ; France was bound to aid Russia. But this crisis, like its predecessors, could have been averted if all the Powers had sincerely desired to avert it. During twelve days of hourly and feverish negotiation, Sir Edward Grey strove to avert it.

He was backed by France, Italy, and Russia. Serbia was persuaded to submit to all the terms of the ultimatum save two ; and these she asked to have referred to the Hague Tribunal. Austria took this as a rejection of the ultimatum, declared war, and began to bombard Belgrade. Still the efforts for peace continued. Grey urged that the matter should be referred to a European conference ; this was rejected by Germany as being wounding to the dignity of Austria. He implored Germany to bring pressure to bear upon Austria in the interests of peace, as she had earlier done ; there was no response, though at the last moment Germany does seem to have made some representations to Austria. He asked Germany to make any suggestion that would make for peace, promising his support, and undertaking to have nothing to do with France or Russia if they did not fall in. Still there was no response. Austria and Russia both mobilised. Thereupon Germany issued an ultimatum to Russia demanding her immediate demobilisation ; and on August 1st Germany and Russia were at war. War between Germany and France automatically followed.

The British Attitude.—What was Britain to do ? Up to the last moment her action was uncertain. Both France and Russia had implored Grey to declare definitely on their side. It has been argued that if he had done so before it was too late, Germany would have hesitated, and the war would have been averted. He could not do so without the authority of Parliament ; but he did warn the German ambassador that if Germany went to war with France and Russia, Britain would inevitably be drawn in. In Grey's own view, and in that of most people, Britain was bound in honour to intervene, not because she was in any way formally committed, but because France and Russia had, so far as it was possible to judge, loyally striven to keep the peace during a series of years, and in this last crisis ; and to leave them to be ruined would have been disastrous for Europe and for Britain. But there was a considerable body of opinion in Britain which thought it possible to keep out of the inferno, and it had influential spokesmen in the Cabinet.

German Invasion of Belgium.—It is probable that Parliament and the country would have resolved to go into the war in any case, but there might have been divisions and uncertainties. All uncertainty was brought to an end when Germany invaded Belgium. The neutrality of Belgium was guaranteed by the Great Powers, including Germany. When war seemed to be inevitable, Sir

Edward Grey, following the precedent set by Gladstone in 1870, sent identical notes to France and Germany asking for assurances that the neutrality of Belgium would be respected. France immediately replied in the affirmative. Germany answered that she could not reply without disclosing her plan of campaign. Three days later (August 3rd) German forces crossed the Belgian frontier, without a shadow of justification or a declaration of war. The King of the Belgians sent a moving appeal to Britain for protection. At once a British ultimatum, with twenty-four hours' grace, was sent to Berlin. When this ultimatum was presented to the German Chancellor—who seems to have hoped to the last that Britain would keep out of the war—he exclaimed against going to war "for a scrap of paper." At 11 p.m. on August 4th, 1914, Britain, and all the British peoples throughout the world, were at war; and the most cruel and terrible ordeal in their long history began.

A War of the Empire.—It was Britain who declared war; and legally her action involved the whole British Empire in the struggle. But if they had seen fit to do so, the great Dominions could have stood aloof, either throwing off their allegiance, or simply offering no help. They might reasonably say, as the United States said, that they were not concerned in the quarrels of Europe. As for India, full as she was of political unrest, if she had desired to do so she could have thrown off the British yoke, and there would have been no means of preventing her. So, also, could all the subject peoples of the newly annexed territories. But the whole British Empire went into the grim conflict with equal determination. On that terrible August day when the old world came to an end, the wires were blocked with messages of loyalty. "When England is at war, Canada is at war." "To the last man and the last shilling Australia will support the cause of the Empire." These messages were typical of the assurances of loyal comradeship that came from every part of the Empire. They were not mere words. They were gloriously fulfilled in the years of battle. The voluntary discipline of freedom was as strong as, and more lasting than, the strength that came from authority. In the ordeal of the war that great process of change which had turned Britain into a democracy, and the British Empire into the British Commonwealth, was nobly justified.

Supplementary Reading on Book IX

The subject-matter of this Book is covered by Book XI and the first three chapters of Book XII of the *Short History of the British Commonwealth* (Vol. II, pp. 600–774). There is a good short book on the period in the Home University Library, by G. P. Gooch. Book VII of the *Piers Plowman Social and Economic Histories* covers this period. For the foreign history of the period, reference may be made to Holland Rose's *Development of the European Nations* (since 1878). Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of King Edward VII* provides a detailed history of the period 1902–1910, as well as useful sidelights on the earlier part of the period. R. H. Gretton's *Modern England* (2 Vols.), which begins in 1880, contains much entertaining matter. But the history of this period, in England, has not yet been systematically presented. For India and the Dominions, see the works named under Book VIII. For Egypt, Lord Milner's *England in Egypt*. Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt* (2 Vols.) is an almost unique example of a detailed study of a great piece of work written by the principal actor.

BOOK X

THE GREAT WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

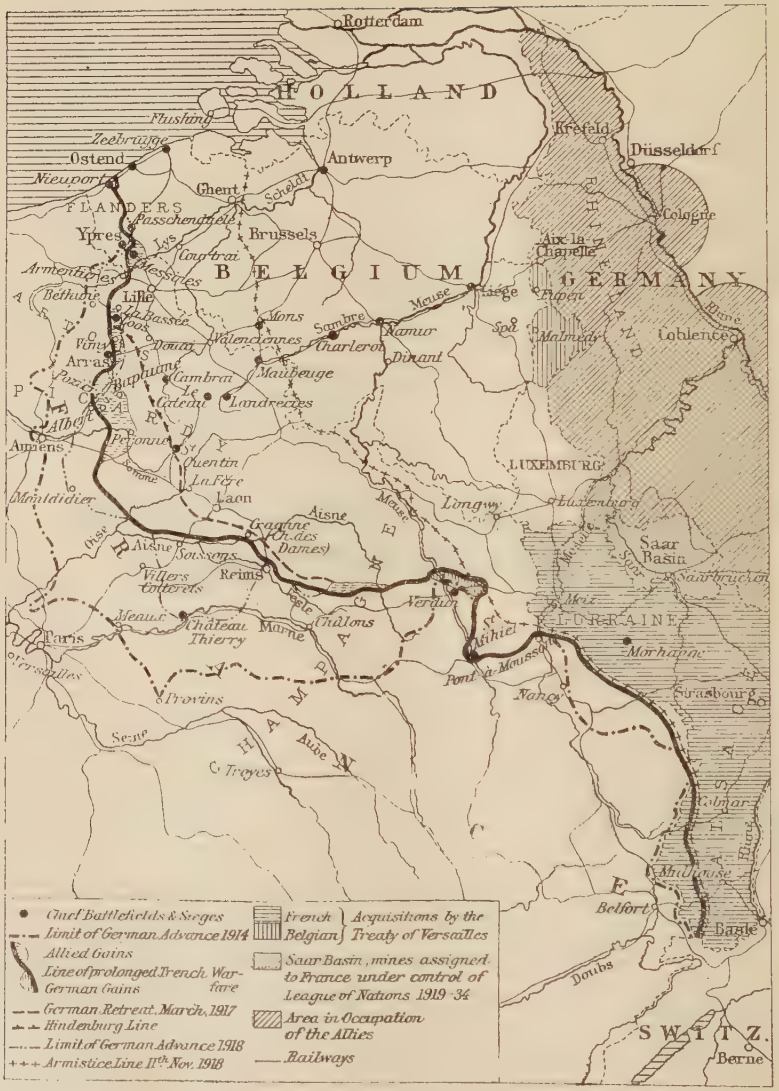


FIG. 47.—The Western Front.

BOOK X

THE GREAT WAR AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

We are still too near the Great War of 1914–1918 to form an assured judgment about its significance. But beyond question it was one of the great turning-points in human history. It was the first event in history in which all the races and peoples of the world were concerned, and knew that they were concerned. It has led to the establishment of the first organisation ever devised for the purpose of dealing with the common concerns of the whole world—the League of Nations. It has brought about a great change in the relations between Europe and the non-European world. It has caused more drastic changes in the political geography of Europe than any previous war since the Barbarian Invasions. It has produced profound changes in the character and organisation of the British Empire. It has transformed the situation of Britain. Throughout the course of modern history her insular position has given her a greater security than any other European country has enjoyed. Now, unless war can be abolished, she is more insecure than any other country, because the sea-going trade by which she lives can be interrupted by submarines, and her teeming cities can be destroyed from the air. Her trade itself has been seriously impaired by the rise of competing industries in other countries, and by the introduction of new sources of power (oil and electricity) in which she is less richly provided than other countries. The strain of war, and the new and large demands upon government made both by the war and by the work of reconstruction which had to follow it, have severely tested the working of the democratic system in all countries. It is impossible to foretell what the results of these great changes will be. But it is quite clear that when the war ended, the British peoples and the world as a whole entered upon a new era in human history—an era which may be extremely dangerous unless the democracy which now controls our fortunes is wisely guided.

CHAPTER LIII

THE GREAT WAR (1914–1918)

1. The British Part in the War

In previous European wars in which Britain had played a part, her contribution had been, in the main, threefold. She had held the seas and exercised the pressure of naval power ; she had subsidised her allies with grants of money ; and she had sent small armies to play a minor part in the land-fighting in regions where they could easily be withdrawn by sea if need be, as in the Peninsular and the Crimean Wars. In the greatest of all wars the part which fell to her was far greater and more difficult.

The Rôle of the Navy.—From the first hour of the war to the last, the British Navy held command of the seas, with the aid of the fleets of France and later of Italy and the United States. It was endangered by the terrible menace of the submarine ; but it never failed. If it had failed, the war on land could not have been carried on, not merely by Britain herself, but by her allies. The stranglehold which the Navy obtained upon the commerce of the enemy was one of the main causes of his ultimate collapse. It denied to the enemy countries, and it secured to the allies, supplies from all the world.

The Function of Supply.—Upon Britain also fell the main burden of supplying the allied countries with food, and with munitions of war ; and in the carriage of these goods her mercantile marine was exposed to perils such as it had never had to face before, and suffered gigantic losses. Her manufacturing resources were strained to equip her own armies and those of her allies with munitions. In order to concentrate upon these tasks she had to sacrifice, for the time being, the bulk of the foreign trade by which she lived : much of it fell into other hands, and could not be regained when peace came. She had not merely to supply grants of money to the weaker among the allies, she had in a large degree to finance their foreign purchases of foodstuffs and munitions ; and for this purpose she had to sacrifice a large proportion of her accumulated foreign investments, which passed largely into the possession of the United States. At the end of the war she was burdened with a colossal debt, mainly owed to her own

citizens, but a substantial part of it to the United States. If she had paid only for her own part in the war, the burden would have been relatively easy to bear : it was the debts which she had incurred on behalf of her allies which made the burden a crippling one, and made her recovery difficult.

British Effort on Land.—But in addition to all this, she and her daughter nations had to place armies in the field on a scale never before known, and never anticipated. She had to conduct campaigns simultaneously in many different parts of the world. Besides the huge forces which had to be maintained throughout the war on the long defensive line in France, large British and Dominion forces—in some cases greater than any British armies that had ever been put in the field before—had to be maintained, at various periods of the war, in Italy, in Macedonia, at Gallipoli, in Egypt and Palestine, in Mesopotamia, in India, in China, in East Africa, in South Africa, and in West Africa. To maintain these vast armies, besides manning the fleet and the mercantile marine, she had to call out her whole manhood, as fully as the countries which had long been habituated to compulsory military service. Canada and New Zealand offered their manhood as completely as the mother-country, and Australia, though she did not adopt conscription, sent almost as high a proportion ; India and South Africa also sent very large contingents, though in their cases universal service was impracticable.

Training the Armies.—It had never been anticipated as possible, either in Britain or in the Dominions, that a military effort on this scale would ever be required. Even those who before the war had advocated compulsory military training had demanded it only for home defence—for which, thanks to the Navy, no armies were needed. Hence almost the whole of these vast armies had to be enrolled, trained, and equipped after the war began, while women, boys, and old men took part in the labour of the munitions factories ; and this made the effort all the more remarkable. For this reason, the British share in the land-war did not reach its full dimensions until the third year of struggle ; but from that time onwards the British peoples bore as large a part of the shock as any of the allies.

Voluntary Recruitment.—During the first two years men were still recruited on a voluntary basis. It was only in 1916 that compulsory service was enacted. Perhaps the most remarkable fact of all is that, until a late stage, there were more volunteers than could be equipped and trained. They came from the ends of the earth,

sacrificing their careers to offer their lives : they poured into the recruiting stations from the mine, the factory, the classroom, the office, the slum doss-house, and the country mansion. In all the long history of Britain there has been nothing more noble than the spectacle of these myriads of young men, torn from their normal lives, and undergoing voluntarily the tedium of drill and the discomfort of the camp in order to fit themselves for the misery and agony of the trenches. In Britain alone not less than five million men voluntarily offered themselves. A terribly high proportion of them had to be rejected as physically unfit. This was the legacy of a century of industrialism and of city slums. The best, under this system, were the first to go, and had to face the worst ordeal for the longest time. For that reason Britain probably lost a higher proportion of her finest manhood than other countries. A million of them were killed or crippled. That loss throws a double burden of responsibility upon those who follow them.

A War of Nations.—The Great War was, indeed, unlike any other war that has ever been fought in history. It was a war not of armies and fleets but of whole nations. Millions of men—from beginning to end, something like fifty millions—were engaged, and the battle fronts extended for hundreds of miles. The slaughter was on a scale never before known or imagined. Behind the lines, the whole energy of the combatant nations was enlisted in the service of the war. New methods of warfare added new horrors. The lurking submarine made every sea-voyage perilous ; airships and airplanes not only extended the battle into the upper air, but rained death upon cities ; myriads of guns belched forth explosive shells on a scale never anticipated, using in a day a supply of munitions that would have served for whole campaigns in any earlier war ; and clouds of poison-gas completed the inferno. It seemed as if the civilised world had sunk back into savagery, but it was a savagery that was armed with all the weapons of science. Yet myriads of men endured these horrors steadfastly for more than four years. The world must never forget their agonies.

2. The First Campaign : 1914

Serbia.—The War began with Austria's attack upon Serbia. Against overwhelming odds, Serbia repelled two attacks, and was still holding on among her mountains when winter came to put an end to

the campaign. But the struggle in Serbia, heroic as it was, was dwarfed by the clash of gigantic armies in the West and in the East.

The German Plan.—Germany, whose General Staff had prepared the plan of campaign long beforehand, calculated that Russia would be slow to get her huge armies into motion, and therefore planned to throw four-fifths of her forces into a sudden attack upon France, confidently expecting to crush her in a few weeks and then be free to deal with the Eastern campaign. But, being unwilling to attack the highly fortified frontier between France and Germany, she had long since planned to send her strongest forces sweeping through the neutral territory of Belgium, and thence down upon Paris. France, on her side, massed her strongest forces in Lorraine, intending to attack the Germans in that region : if this plan had been successful, the German attack on Belgium might have failed.

Belgium Overrun.—But the French attack in Lorraine was a disastrous failure. And the Germans, sweeping down upon Belgium, captured the great fortress of Liége after a twelve days' siege ; swept before them the small Belgian army, which took refuge behind the forts of Antwerp ; and within three weeks of the opening of the war had the greater part of Belgium at their mercy. They secured their position by a reign of terror. Myriads of Belgian refugees poured across the Channel to Britain, where they remained throughout the war.

The Retreat from Mons.—A line of French armies lay along the Franco-Belgian frontier. On their extreme left, at *Mons*, was the British Expeditionary Force of 80,000 men, under Sir John French, which had been swiftly and silently moved into France in the first days of the war.* The German avalanche burst upon them on August 23rd, when there was fierce fighting at Mons. On their right the French had been forced to fall back, for the Germans had swiftly captured the fortress of *Namur*, which was to have been the pivot of the line of defence, and beaten the French at *Charleroi*. On the left also the British army was in danger of being outflanked by overwhelming German forces. There was nothing for it but retreat. A retreat in face of a superior enemy flushed with victory is an extremely difficult operation. It was only made possible by a gallant rear-guard action fought at *Le Cateau*, by the corps com-

* For the Western Front, see School Atlas, Plate 46*b*.

manded by Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien. Then followed a terrible week, during which it seemed that the finest army ever sent out by Britain was shattered and useless. The French also were retreating, and it was extremely difficult to maintain contact. It was the aim of the Germans either to destroy the British army, or to drive it into a fortress, where it could be overwhelmed at leisure. The army escaped from this trap; and falling back behind the River Grand Morin, was quickly reorganised and made ready for fresh fighting.

Battle of the Marne.—Meanwhile, the Germans were sweeping down upon Paris; on September 2nd the French Government had to evacuate the city, and take refuge in Bordeaux. Then came one of the critical moments in history. General von Kluck, commanding the westernmost of the German armies, began to swing round towards the south-east, evidently meaning to encircle the French. Thereupon the French generalissimo, Joffre, launched a fierce attack upon von Kluck's exposed flank, sending out every available man from Paris in taxis, omnibuses, and every other means of transport. Kluck wavered and stopped. The long line of French armies, and the reorganised British army, turned upon the German lines, forced open a gap in them, and in the five-day battle of the Marne compelled them to fall back.

Deadlock on the Aisne.—This was the first turning-point of the war. Paris was never again seriously threatened. The Germans took up a position on the line of the *Aisne*, from which hard hammering failed to dislodge them. A long line of trenches came into being, and the stationary trench war, which lasted until 1918, began. The greater part of this line, from Switzerland to Laon, remained almost unaltered for nearly four years, and hundreds of thousands of men held grimly on to the line on both sides amid the mud, the blood, and the constant alarms of the trenches.

Fall of Antwerp.—By the beginning of October, the Germans had been immobilised on the line of the Aisne. They next turned northwards. Bringing up fresh reserves from Lorraine and elsewhere, they directed a fierce attack on *Antwerp*, where the remnants of the Belgian army held out. Their huge siege-guns shattered the Antwerp forts. Two half-trained British naval brigades were hurriedly sent to help the Belgians, while a British force boldly advanced from France into western Belgium. But Antwerp could not be saved. It fell on October 9th, and the remnant of the Belgian army fell back along the coast, to a position behind the River Yser;

the dykes were cut to help them in resisting the Germans ; and here the little Belgian army clung on to a last tiny strip of Belgian territory for four years.

The Ypres Salient.—Meanwhile, the Germans had begun to

FIG. 48.—The Russian and Rumanian Fronts

make a push for the coast : if they could have captured the ports on the Straits of Dover, they might have made British co-operation difficult. A race for the coast filled October, each side extending its line northwards and trying to outflank the other. As a part of this movement, the British army was transferred northward, so as to hold

the part of the line next to the Belgians and nearest to Calais and Boulogne. *Ypres* and *Armentières*—names which became dreadfully familiar to all British folk—were the chief points in the new British line. They were held throughout the war, and more British blood has been shed round the salient of Ypres than in any other place on the face of the earth. Here the army, after all the battering it had suffered, had to submit to a new and very fierce German onslaught ; there was no more desperate fighting during the war than in the *First Battle of Ypres* (October 19th–November 14th). The picked troops of the German army were hurled into the attack in immense numbers ; and the line was only just held. After this battle, the fighting quietened for the winter ; the line of trenches from the sea to Switzerland was gradually stabilised. The Germans had failed to crush France, which they had confidently hoped to do.

The Russian Campaign. — Meanwhile, in the East, the Russians had come into the field, far earlier than they were expected. In a gallant endeavour to relieve the pressure upon France, they invaded East Prussia (August). But they were caught, in the confused country of the Masurian lakes, by the old German general Hindenburg, who knew the country intimately ; and at *Tannenberg* (August 26th) they suffered an appalling disaster, losing 100,000 prisoners. During the autumn the Russians had hard fighting against German and Austrian armies in Poland ; Warsaw was for a moment threatened, though the invaders were repelled. But in the south of the long eastern line, the Russians achieved great though temporary successes, overrunning the greater part of the Austrian province of Galicia. When winter descended, it seemed that deadlock had come in the west ; but in the east it was hoped that a great Russian advance would bring victory to the allies. Men pinned their hopes to " the Russian steam-roller."

Turkey in the War.—While the autumn fighting was going on in the West and East, a new combatant entered the arena. At the beginning of the war, two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, then in the Mediterranean, had escaped from pursuing British ships and taken refuge in Constantinople. Their guns, commanding the city, perhaps helped to persuade the Turks to join the German side in the war, though Turkey had long been under German influence. On October 29th Turkey declared war. This made it impossible for the allies to send munitions or other help to Russia by the Black Sea ; and the Baltic was already closed by the

German fleet. It also exposed Egypt and the Suez Canal to attack, and the Suez Canal is one of the main arteries of British imperial trade; while India might be threatened by way of the Bagdad railway and the Persian Gulf. These menaces greatly affected the course of the fighting in the next year, and drew off forces that might otherwise have been employed in France.

Colonial Campaigns.—Meanwhile, there had been campaigns in distant regions of the world, several of which would have ranked as important wars at any other time. In China a Japanese army, with a contingent from India, seized the German fortress of Kiao-Chau. Forces from Australia occupied German New Guinea, and forces from New Zealand took German Samoa. In South Africa there was a rebellion among the more discontented Boers, which was suppressed by Generals Botha and Smuts, who, twelve years earlier, had led armies against Britain in South Africa. In West Africa joint French and British forces attacked Togoland and the Cameroons; while in German East Africa a long and difficult campaign began, which was not ended until 1917.

The War at Sea.—Germany could send no aid to her outlying possessions scattered over the world. But their fate must depend upon the issue of the struggle in Europe; and at the end of the first campaign, Germany had the better of the struggle in Europe, though she had failed in her main aim. On the seas, however, the supremacy of the allies seemed to be securely established. The main German fleet did not venture to come out; but in August a squadron of German cruisers was severely handled by Admiral Beatty in *Heligoland* Bight, and three of them were sunk. From its main base at Scapa Flow in the Orkneys the British Grand Fleet commanded the entrance to the North Sea. In these stormy waters many ships were engaged in an unresting vigil to cut off the trade of Germany, while squadrons based on other naval ports patrolled the North Sea. The blockade did not at first hurt Germany as much as had been hoped, partly because America resented interference with her trade, and partly because a stream of goods found access to Germany through Holland and the Scandinavian countries. German submarines caused some alarm, even from the first days of the war, especially when, in September, a single submarine sank three British cruisers. But the submarines were no more able than the main German fleet to interfere with the constant passage of troops from England to France, or with the inflow of supplies for the allies from all the world.

Coronel and the Falklands.—In more distant seas, however, some German ships, which were at large when the war began, notably the gallant *Emden*, did a great deal of damage, sinking many British trading ships. And in November two powerful German cruisers, isolated in the Pacific, after escaping from British and Japanese pursuers, came upon a squadron of light-armed and slow-sailing British cruisers, and, after a grim battle off *Coronel*, on the coast of Chile, sank them and their crews. Vengeance soon came. A month later, Admiral Sturdee intercepted the German cruisers off the *Falkland Islands*, and sank them both. By the end of 1914 the allies held the seas securely; and though they were later to be threatened by the menace of the submarine, the control of the seas was to prove, in the long run, the decisive factor of the war.

Drilling New Armies.—Throughout these first months of the war, and throughout the dismal winter, hundreds of thousands of men were drilling in every part of Britain and the Dominions. They were the New Armies, whom Lord Kitchener (who had been made War Secretary) was getting ready. At first there were neither arms nor uniforms for them: on these the factories were busy. A few of them, including the first drafts of Canadians, began to appear in the field in 1915, and large numbers of Australians and New Zealanders came to Egypt to complete their training; there they could help in the defence of the Suez Canal, which the Turks vainly attacked early in 1915. But it was not until 1916 that the New Armies were ready in strength. Till then the Old Army and the Territorials had to hold the line. To help them, troops were brought from India; but the Sikhs and the Gurkhas suffered terribly from the cold and the wet. Fitter fields for their valour were to be found later, in Mesopotamia and in Palestine.

3. The Campaign of 1915

Poison-Gas.—1915 was a year of disappointments for the allies. In the West several attempts were made to break through the German lines. In spite of a terrible expenditure of life, they all failed. The Germans, on their side, made a fierce attempt to break through, in the *Second Battle of Ypres* (April). They nearly succeeded, thanks to the use of poison-gas, which they introduced for the first time. Waves of deadly fumes rolled down upon the British lines, and reduced the troops to impotence, for no preparations had been made for dealing

with this loathsome mode of attack, which all the nations had forsworn. But even against this horror the courage of the army held out ; and the Canadians, who now first appeared in the fighting-line, showed great gallantry in helping to close the gap. Some ground was lost ; but the terrible salient of Ypres was still held.

The Munitions Effort.—It now became necessary not only to devise and manufacture masks for the troops as a safeguard against gas, but also to create appliances for carrying on chemical warfare on the allied side. Here was a new demand upon the factories at home. Moreover, the battles of the spring showed that the expenditure of shells was on a vastly greater scale than had ever been anticipated, and that the army's equipment in heavy artillery, field guns, and machine guns must be multiplied many fold. There was an outcry in Britain ; the cheap Press began to cry treason ; Lord Haldane, who had done more than any other man to make ready for the war, was hounded out of office ; the ministry was reconstituted as a coalition of all parties, Mr. Asquith retaining the Premiership ; and a new Ministry of Munitions was created, with Mr. Lloyd George at its head. With unlimited credit, it set to work to turn every factory capable of being so utilised into the service of the army : the whole manufacturing power of Britain was turned to the production of guns, shells, airplanes, and all the other innumerable engines of war. The traditional trade union restrictions upon output were abandoned. Thousands of men and women were withdrawn from other trades. The export trade, by which Britain lives, was for the time being abandoned. More and more, as the months wore on, the whole strength of the nation and of the Empire was concentrated upon the one supreme aim of winning the war. Unlimited orders were also placed in America. To pay for them British credit was deeply pledged. But it took time for this gigantic effort to mature. It was not until late in 1916 that its results were at all fully felt. They were still growing in volume when the war ended.

Italy joins the Allies.—One great encouragement came to the allies in the West in this year. Italy, though a member of the Triple Alliance, had refused to join her allies on the outbreak of war, because she thought the war unjust. She had remained neutral. But a powerful popular movement sprang up, to demand her participation against Germany and Austria. It was inspired partly by indignation at the conduct of Germany in Belgium and at her methods of

warfare, but still more by a desire to conquer from Austria the "unredeemed" Italian territories of Trent and Trieste. The entry of Italy (May 1915) aroused high hopes on the allied side. But the Italian campaign had to be conducted on extremely difficult and highly defensible ground, in the High Alps and on the plateau of Gorizia.* The Italians made slow progress. Nevertheless they kept a large Austrian force tied up during a critical period. But for the intervention of Italy, which came at a very difficult time, the issue of the war might have been different.

Russian Disasters.—The "ramshackle empire" of Austria would have been gravely imperilled by the Italian attack, if the Russians had been able to keep up the pressure which they had begun in the previous autumn. Then they had overrun a great part of Galicia, and in the early spring of 1915 they completed the conquest of Galicia and began to cross the passes of the Carpathians into Hungary. If this attack could have been pressed home, Austria would have collapsed, and Germany, alone, would have been unable to hold out. Therefore the main German campaign of this year was directed against the Russians. Thanks to their superiority in guns and munitions, the Germans were able to draw large forces from the western front; and in April and May, and on through the summer, they dealt a series of hammer blows against the Russians, first in Galicia, and then, farther north, in Poland. Ill-armed, and ill-supplied with guns, shells, and rifles, the Russians were driven back like sheep, fighting desperately but hopelessly, often without weapons. More than a million Russians were killed or captured. The captives were employed, like thousands of Belgian captives, to till the fields and man the factories of Germany. By September the Germans had conquered all Galicia, all Poland including its capital, Warsaw, and all Lithuania. The Russian armies were reconstituted on a new line, far back in Russian territory, behind the line of the Pripet marshes. But they had lost irreplaceable guns and rifles. Their strength was broken, unless they could be supplied with munitions by their western allies.

The Dardanelles Campaign.—It was the urgent need of helping and saving Russia which led to the main British effort of this year, the attack on the Dardanelles.† If the Dardanelles could be

* See School Atlas, Plate 47*b*.
† See School Atlas, Plate 47*d*.

forced, Constantinople would have to submit ; there would be a clear passage for supplies to Russia by the Black Sea, and the Russian armies could be re-equipped. Moreover, the Balkan States, which were anxiously watching the course of events, would probably then come in on the side of the allies, and Serbia would be saved. The plan was a sound one, but it was ruined by bad execution. The military authorities insisted at first that they could not spare troops, since every man was needed for the western front. Accordingly, a purely naval attack was made in March. It failed ; but it was clear that it would have succeeded had a sufficient force been available for disembarkation. Accordingly, next month, an attack by land and sea was begun, with a magnificent force of British, Australian, and New Zealand troops, aided by a small French contingent. But the enemy was warned, and the task had now become too hard. With heroic gallantry two landings were made on the rocky coast in face of a storm of firing, one at Point Helles, at the tip of the peninsula, the other farther north, at the point which became famous as Anzac—a name derived from the initials of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. No episode in all the war was more heroic than the way in which the troops hung on to these exposed positions, constantly under fire, tormented by heat and dust and flies, and having to draw all their food and even water from the ships—also under fire.

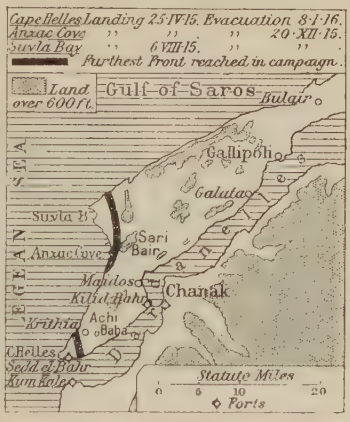


FIG. 49.—Gallipoli.

Its Failure.—In August a fresh landing was made at Suvla Bay, by a force mainly drawn from the New Army. A very vigorous attack was made, which came within an ace of success, as the German general in command of the Turkish defenders later admitted. Some of the troops actually reached the summit of the ridge, and looked over to the sea on the other side. But the attack just failed. After that, the gallant army still hung on to their positions, in circumstances of incredible difficulty, until the end of the year. But there was no further use in sacrificing life. It was decided to evacuate the

Dardanelles. The whole force was, with great skill, withdrawn without loss (December and January). All its gallantry seemed to have been wasted. Yet it had kept 300,000 Turks occupied during a critical period; it had greatly weakened the Turkish army; and perhaps the later victories of the allies over the Turks, which helped to bring the war to an end, were partly due to this heroic misadventure.

Serbia and Salonika.—The army of the Dardanelles was needed elsewhere. For there had been other disasters in the East. When the failure of the Dardanelles expedition was manifest (October 1915), Bulgaria, hitherto neutral, decided to throw in her lot with Germany. She attacked the gallant Serbians—already worn out by repeated Austrian attacks—while an Austrian and German army swept upon them from the north. The Serbians were over-

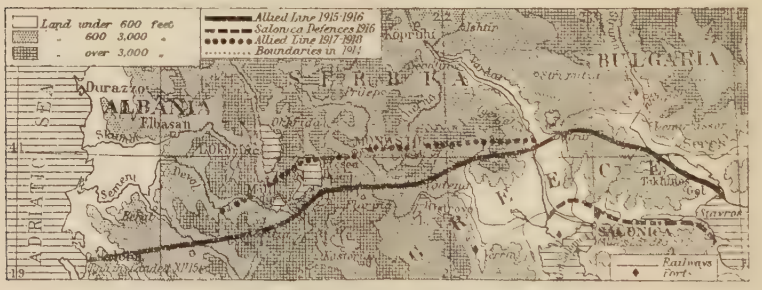


FIG. 50.—The Salonika Front, Bulgaria and Greece.

whelmed. Their country was conquered. Only a remnant of their army could be withdrawn by way of Albania. This was a very grave alteration of the situation in the East. There was a danger lest the Germans and Austrians with their Turkish and Bulgarian allies might force Greece into their confederacy; the Greek king had German sympathies. To guard against this danger, an allied force was sent to hold the important port of *Salonika*, so as to secure at least some foothold for future operations in the Balkans.*

Mesopotamia.—Meanwhile, another attack against the Turks had begun well but had led to disaster. At the end of 1914 a small force had been sent from India to Basra, at the head of the Persian

* School Atlas, Plate 47*b*.

Gulf, to guard the end of an important oil pipe-line. Finding little opposition, it had been tempted, with inadequate resources, to push up the Tigris valley and occupy Lower Mesopotamia.* All the best Turkish forces were occupied in the Dardanelles, and so the Mesopotamian army was able to secure unexpected success, and to win several victories over the Turkish levies. In November, General Townshend, against his better judgment, was persuaded to make a dash for Bagdad. But by that time the failure of the Dardanelles campaign was known, and Turkish reinforcements were available for Mesopotamia. At *Ctesiphon* Townshend was defeated. He had to fall back upon *Kut-el-Amara ;* and there, in December, he and his army were besieged by far superior Turkish forces.

FIG. 51.—The Mesopotamian Campaign.

The Lusitania.—Thus, in all the record of 1915, there was little to encourage the allies. Overseas, indeed, German South-West Africa had been conquered by Botha and Smuts, and the last of the surface raiders had been disposed of. But the submarines had become more menacing. In May 1915, the great American liner *Lusitania* was sunk off the south coast of Ireland ; and many other merchant-vessels met a similar fate. Nevertheless, the strangle-hold of the Navy was still complete, and its pressure was gradually becoming more effective.

4. The Campaign of 1916

The Germans had won great victories, both in the West and in the East. But they had not yet won Victory. They were feeling the strain of the pressure by land and sea. Soon the superiority in equipment and preparation which they had enjoyed in the first stages

* School Atlas, Plate 47*c*.

of the war would pass from them. It was essential that they should burst through the bonds of steel that were strangling them.

Battle of Jutland.—In May 1916, their great fleet at last ventured out from its fortified harbours. Off the coast of *Jutland* it was attacked, rather recklessly, by Admiral Beatty with his squadron of battle-cruisers. Four of these great ships, in which defensive strength was sacrificed to speed, were sunk. But when the main British fleet under Jellicoe came up, the Germans avoided battle, and retreated under the cover of smoke-screens, helped by a mist which had arisen. If the battle had been fought out, it is probable that the German fleet would have been destroyed. Jellicoe has been blamed for not pressing on at all risks. He preferred to avoid the risk of being led into minefields and submarine traps, and of endangering the Grand Fleet which was the main pillar of the allies' fortunes. The German fleet made good its escape, having inflicted heavier losses than it received. But it never came out again ; and this was almost as good a result as the most crushing victory could have yielded.

The Attack on Verdun. — Meanwhile, the Germans had resolved on a desperate attempt to break through the allied line in France, being now able to bring back large numbers of troops from the eastern front. For their main attack they chose *Verdun*. Here, in February, they began a fierce onslaught, in which almost every division of their western army was at one time or another thrown into the fray, and 4,000 guns were employed. At a colossal cost of life, they gained some territory on both sides of the Meuse, and captured the two important forts of Douaumont and Vaux. But the French stood firm. The onslaught was a failure. This had become clear by June ; so much so that the Germans removed their chief of staff, and gave the supreme command to the heroes of the eastern front, Hindenburg and Ludendorff. It was the failure at Verdun that first gave to the Germans a chill sense of the hopelessness of their task ; especially when, in October, the French regained Forts Douaumont and Vaux.

Italian and Russian Advances.—The allies did everything in their power to relieve the pressure on Verdun. The Italians made a great offensive against Austria : they forced the line of the Isonzo River, and captured *Gorizia*. And this success greatly helped the Russians, who in spite of their recent disasters, being now relieved from the German pressure, made a gallant attack on the Austrians

in Galicia, and won some striking successes, taking 300,000 prisoners.

The New British Armies.—But the main counter-attack fell to the British armies, co-operating with the French on their right. For the New Armies, from Britain and the Dominions, were at last in the field, and were supported, at last, by unlimited artillery and munitions, and by great numbers of airplanes. They had, also, a new weapon to introduce—the steel-clad Tanks, which were expected to overcome the difficulties of trench-warfare. Although these expectations were not fully realised, the Tanks certainly surprised the enemy. In the spring the new armies took over a great part of the French line, thus materially helping the French. Even then, they held a far shorter length of line than the French ; but it was the part of the line against which the German forces were most heavily massed, and on which (apart from Verdun) the heaviest fighting took place.

Battle of the Somme.—On July 1st, 1916, Sir Douglas Haig, who had succeeded French as commander-in-chief, launched, after a terrific artillery preparation, the biggest attack which the allies had yet attempted : the *Battle of the Somme*. It went on, without cessation, until it was stopped by the mud of winter. At a colossal cost in lives, it made a great bulge in the German line ; and if it could have been followed up, there might have been a break-through. But the Germans, foreseeing this danger, were meanwhile preparing an elaborately fortified and much shorter series of defences, which came be known as the Hindenburg Line. When the time came to to renew the advance, the allies found that the Germans had slipped away to these new defences, devastating the intervening country, and strewing it with mines and other obstacles to their advance.

Nevertheless, when the campaign of 1916 closed, the position of the allies, after the German failure at Verdun and the victories of the Somme and of Gorizia, was far more favourable than at any earlier date ; and for the first time the prospect of defeat began to loom before the Germans.

Collapse of Rumania.—Elsewhere, however, things had not gone so well. In August 1916, Rumania, encouraged by the victories of the Russians, entered the war on the allied side, and invaded Transylvania, thus once again threatening the Austrian Empire. The combined allied force at Salonika, now strengthened by the remnants of the Serbian army, struck northwards to assist

them and to distract the Bulgarians. But German and Austrian forces were swiftly thrown into Transylvania, and beat back the Rumanian invaders, while the Bulgarians attacked Rumania from the south. Before the end of the year, Rumania had lost her capital, and was driven back to a strip of territory on the Russian border; while the Salonika force was held up in the difficult country round Monastir and Lake Doiran.

Mesopotamia and Egypt.—Meanwhile, in Mesopotamia, the ill-fated little army at *Kut-el-Amara* was forced to surrender (April), despite repeated desperate attempts to relieve it. After this disaster, very vigorous efforts were made to relieve the situation. Troops were poured into Mesopotamia from India, with vast supplies, which would have saved the situation a year earlier. A very able commander, Sir Stanley Maude, took command. He was to bring about a rapid reversal of fortune. But he was not ready to move until the end of the year. Again, in Egypt, preparations were being made for an advance into Palestine.* A railway and a water-pipe line were quietly laid across the desert of Sinai. By the end of the year all was ready for an invasion of Palestine; and meanwhile a young Oxford don, Colonel Lawrence, was at work among the Bedouin of Arabia, stimulating a great rebellion against the Turks. The downfall of Turkey was to be brought about by the twofold attack in Mesopotamia and in Palestine.

The Outlook in 1916.—These things were all known to the German High Command. Whether they looked east or west, the outlook for them was gloomy at the end of 1916. They made up their minds to resort to desperate remedies. But people at home did not know all this. To them the slow advance and the heavy carnage on the Somme (which cost 400,000 casualties), the humiliating surrender at Kut—not yet avenged—and the Rumanian disaster seemed to prove that no progress was being made. There was widespread disheartenment, in the allied countries as well as in Germany. And the staying power of the nations was to be yet more severely tested in the next year.

Mr. Lloyd George.—In Britain there was a change of ministry. Mr. Asquith ceased to be Prime Minister. His place was taken by Mr. Lloyd George, whose energy, vigour, and confidence did much to inspirit the nation. He now introduced an

* School Atlas, Plate 47*c*.

innovation in government, setting up a small War Cabinet of ministers without special departmental responsibility to devote themselves wholly to the conduct of the war. One of them was General Smuts, once the commander of a Boer army against Britain. The Prime Ministers of the Great Dominions were also called into consultation. In the last desperate paroxysm of the war, the British Empire showed a greater unity of purpose and policy than ever before.

5. The Campaign of 1917

Unrestricted Submarine War.—The new year began with an evidence of the desperation of the German High Command. On January 31st they announced that the British Islands were in a state of blockade, and that any ship, allied or neutral, which entered these waters was liable to be sunk at sight. They had realised that unless Britain, now the mainstay of the allies, could be beaten to her knees, their defeat was inevitable. In order to defeat her, they outraged all the laws and customs of civilised warfare (which had always insisted upon mercy for non-combatants) and all the rights of neutral powers. They knew that this action was likely to bring America into the fray. But they calculated that their submarines could inflict so much damage upon British and other shipping before the Americans could enter the war that it would be impossible to transport an American army, or the food and munitions necessary for carrying on the war. They calculated, also, that the terrors of this new kind of attack would frighten the sailors of all nations.

Defeat of the Submarines.—The first few months of "unrestricted" submarine war were alarming—far more alarming than the public was ever allowed to know. The monthly toll of tonnage lost rose by leaps and bounds, until it was nearly 600,000 tons in April; and, of course, sorely needed cargoes were also lost. Yet in spite of this new terror, the courage of the mercantile marine never flinched. Torpedoed sailors, rescued from the sea, promptly signed on for new ships: many of them were torpedoed half a dozen times or more. This was a new kind of peril, against which new measures had to be taken. In the first place the whole nation had to be rationed. Every household was limited as to the amount of food it might buy; and this was done without respect to rank or wealth. The American Ambassador records how, when he stayed with the king, each guest received a fixed amount of bread, one egg, and

lemonade to drink. But, more important, means had to be taken to combat the submarines. New inventions were made for dealing with them. Swarms of fishing-trawlers and motor boats, armed with guns and depth-charges, were sent out to hunt for them. Mystery-ships, known as Q-boats, lured them to rise by appearing as harmless traders, and then sank them by gun-fire. Great nets guarded important passages. Huge minefields were laid, notably one that stretched from Scotland to Scandinavia. Merchant-ships sailed in convoys under the escort of destroyers or swift cruisers. Methods of painting ships were devised to deceive the eyes of the pirates. By all these means the menace of the submarines was gradually mastered. By the end of the year they were no longer formidable. And meanwhile, both in Britain and in America, new shipping was constructed at so unprecedented a pace that new ships were launched faster than old ones were sunk. The "unrestricted" submarine attack was a desperate gambler's device. And it failed.

America in the War.—But it brought the United States into the war, with whole-hearted zeal. She declared war against Germany in April 1917; millions of men were put into training; and the American fleet crossed the Atlantic to join hands with the allies. All difficulties about the blockade of Germany now disappeared, and the pressure became more and more severe. Above all, America was able to share the financial burden of supporting the allies, under which Britain was beginning to stagger. It was, of course, long before the American armies could take the field: they were only actively engaged in fighting during the last five months of the war. But it is significant of the completeness with which the submarine menace was overcome that the great American armies were transported to France without loss, mainly in British ships.

Revolution in Russia.—The submarine attack and its overthrow was the main event of the year, and one of the decisive events of the war. But 1917 was full of other great events, mostly unfavourable to the allies. In March a revolution broke out in Russia, and the Tsar was deposed. The Liberal Government which at first took his place, and the moderate Socialist Government under Kerensky which succeeded it, were both resolute to carry on the war; but the upheaval disorganised the armies, which soon became a mere rabble, whom the Germans easily drove before them. At the end of the year, however, the Bolshevik extremists, led by Lenin and Trotsky, seized power. Their aim was nothing less than world-

revolution, and their first object was to destroy all the old elements of leadership in Russia. To be free for this purpose, they were ready to make peace with Germany on the most humiliating terms. This peace was concluded at *Brest-Litovsk* in December. It left the Germans in control of Poland and the Baltic provinces. What was more important, it left them free to withdraw all their forces from the eastern front in 1918, and to concentrate the whole of their strength upon a last desperate attack in the west. But for the outbreak of the Russian Revolution, it is possible that the war might have been brought to an end in 1917.

Champagne and Passchendaele.—Unhappily the campaign in the west was also badly handled. A new commander-in-chief, Nivelle, had been appointed for the French army. Instead of following up the Somme victory, as Joffre and Haig had meant to do, he worked out a plan for a great French attack in Champagne, which was to be the decisive victory, leaving to the British army only subsidiary attacks. But the Champagne attack was a disastrous failure. The losses were so heavy that it was stopped in a fortnight, and alarming mutinies broke out in the French army. The British army had meanwhile made a successful advance at *Vimy*. But in order to draw off the German attacks from the disorganised French line, it became necessary to start a very vigorous onslaught in the north, from the Ypres salient. The object of this attack was, if possible, to reach Ostend and the Belgian coast, so as to check the submarines. But it only reached the *Passchendaele* ridge. In dismal weather, which turned the fields of Belgium into swamps, it had to be carried on, month after month, with terrible loss of life, until finally it came to an end in the rains of October. In the next month a brilliant success was won, by new methods of attack (in which tanks were freely used) near *Cambrai*. But the first success was not followed up, and much of the ground won was regained by German counter-attacks. Thus 1917, which was to have been the year of victory, turned out to be, on the western front, a year of disillusionment and demoralisation.

Italian Disaster.—And this was not the worst. In October a sudden onslaught by the Austrians, stiffened by six German divisions, broke through the Italian line at *Caporetto*. All that had been gained in two years was lost; the rout was only stayed, far into Italy, on the line of the Piave River; and British and French divisions had to be hurriedly despatched from the hard-pressed

French front to restore the Italian situation. What with the submarine menace, the Russian Revolution, the fruitless campaigns in France, and the disaster in Italy, the year ended in the deepest gloom for the Allies.

Mesopotamia and Palestine.—From the East, however, came better news. The downfall of Turkey was beginning. In Mesopotamia Maude's skilful advance had begun at the close of the previous year. Kut was recaptured after sharp fighting in February.

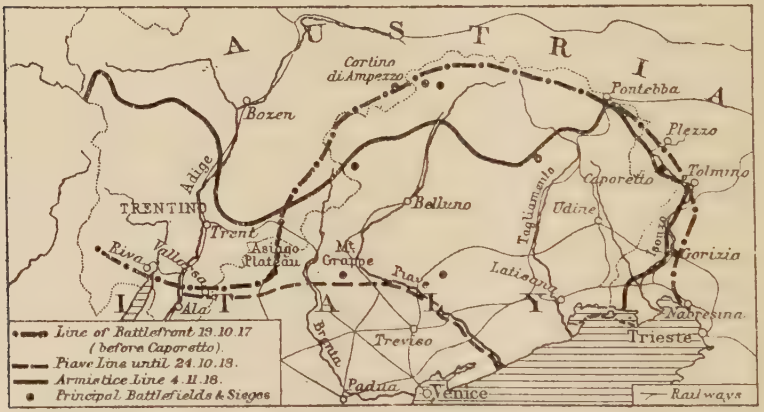


FIG. 52.—The Italian Front.

In March, Maude was once more on the field of *Ctesiphon*, where Townshend had suffered defeat; there was a three days' battle, and the great historic city of *Bagdad* fell into British hands. The Turks were driven far to the north. Their power in Mesopotamia was broken. Then, in Palestine, Allenby, now in command, took up the running. He captured Beersheba (October). He cut the communications of the Turkish army that held Gaza and the cities of Philistia. He took Hebron, while in the desert on his right Lawrence and his wild Bedouins threatened the enemy's communications. Finally, just before Christmas, he entered *Jerusalem*—the first Christian general to be master of that sacred city since the Crusaders lost it in the twelfth century. When the gloomy year 1917 came to an end, the Turkish Empire was manifestly on the verge of collapse.

6. The Campaign of 1918

Counsels of Despair.—When 1918 opened, the German High Command knew that, in spite of their brilliant successes in the previous year, their doom was certain unless they could quickly win a crowning victory. The submarine war had failed. The Americans were already pouring into France, and although they still needed many months of training, their numbers were bound to go on growing. The Turkish Empire was visibly breaking up. The Austrian Empire was terribly overstrained, and its heterogeneous peoples were ready for revolt. Even in Germany there was an alarming growth

FIG. 53.—The Egyptian and Palestinean Campaign.

of discontent: the blockade was causing very severe suffering; and there had been a mutiny in the idle navy at the end of 1917. Unless the British and French armies could be shattered by swift and crushing blows, the end was inevitable. For this final, desperate venture the complete breakdown of resistance on the eastern front gave an opportunity. The whole strength of Germany could be, and must be, used for one final onslaught.

St. Quentin.—It came, in the spring of 1918, in three successive hammer blows, into which every available ounce of strength was thrown. The first attack was directed, on March 21st, against the southern end of the British line near *St. Quentin*—a part of the line which had recently been taken over from the French, and which was

too lightly held. The line was broken ; in a few terrible days all that had been gained in the hard fighting of the Somme, and more, was lost ; the losses in men, guns, and material of all kinds were terrific. The great railway junction of Amiens was threatened : if it had been lost the French and the British armies would have been separated. But the German effort spent itself just before this crucial point was reached. Fresh troops, including even half-trained boys, and unlimited supplies of guns and munitions, were rushed across from Britain ; and by heroic efforts the line was reconstituted. But the terrible days of March were the darkest of the whole war. The stone seemed to have rolled down once more from the top of the hill.

Ypres.—The second attack was directed in April against the northern end of the British line, before the historic salient of Ypres : it may be called the *Third Battle of Ypres*. All that had been won by the grim fighting of 1917 was lost, and for a moment it seemed as if even the Channel ports would be threatened. But the line, though badly bent, did not break ; and the Ypres salient, though made more acute, still remained in British hands.

Chateau Thierry.—The third onslaught was delivered against the French line between Rheims and Soissons, in May. This line, which had been held ever since the autumn of 1914, was broken ; the Aisne was crossed ; and the invaders penetrated deep into French territory, reaching the Marne once more, at *Chateau Thierry*. They were now within forty miles of Paris, which suffered bombardment from the giant gun, Big Bertha.

Turn of the Tide.—These three successive and terrific blows had all achieved remarkable success, but not decisive success. They had nearly, but not quite, reached vital points—Amiens, the Channel ports, Paris. But in delivering them the Germans had spent their force. They had no more strength in reserve. And now the Allies' turn had come. They had at last learnt wisdom from adversity, and had agreed to unity of command, under the great French soldier, Marshal Foch. In the four months from July to November the situation was reversed by an extraordinary series of successive blows, not only in France, but all along the allied lines—in Italy, in Macedonia, in Palestine and Mesopotamia. Never, in all history, has there been a more sudden or a more dramatic reversal of fortune.

Zeebrugge.—The undaunted spirit of the Allies had already been

shown, even at the darkest moment, by a marvellous piece of naval heroism, which a French admiral described as "the finest feat of arms in all naval history of all times and all countries." On St. George's Day (April 23rd) the Dover Patrol set out to seal up the most dangerous nests of submarines, at Zeebrugge and Ostend. Under cover of a screen of smoke, a group of out-of-date cruisers, ferry-boats and submarines boldly entered the harbour of Zeebrugge; two of them were sunk to block the channel; and the Mole was badly damaged. A few nights later the harbour of Ostend was also partly blocked.

The French Advance.—In July the great counter-attack began, when French and American forces broke into the salient created by the recent German advance to Chateau Thierry, and regained all the lost land. A little later an American army wiped out the salient of *St. Mihiel* on the Meuse, which had been held by the Germans since 1914; and began a dogged advance through the wooded country of the Argonne.

The British Advance.—But the main attacks were left to the British armies in co-operation with the French on their immediate right. There had been some doubt whether any army could venture upon a great offensive so soon after it had endured such staggering blows as those of March and April. But Haig knew the stuff of which his men were made. The advance began on August 8th, near Amiens. Soon the lost ground was regained. Stage by stage the attack was extended northward. By the end of August the advancing forces were up against the "Hindenburg line," which had baffled them in 1917. On September 2nd the Hindenburg defences were broken. Then the line began to move forward in the far north, Belgian and British troops moving together into Belgian territory that had been under German control since August 1914. In September and October the whole line was in movement, from Soissons to the sea. The old trench systems were crossed for the last time. The whole German line was yielding, cracking. It was, on a gigantic scale, like that final charge at Waterloo which followed the last attack of the Imperial Guards.

Bulgaria Yields.—And while the iron lines in the west bent and broke, everywhere else the defences of the Central Powers gave way. In Macedonia, after long waiting, the combined forces of Serbians, Greeks, French, and British moved up against the entrenched armies of Bulgaria. A fortnight of hard fighting, and the Bulgarian

resistance broke. By the end of September Bulgaria had asked for an armistice : she was the first of the enemy Powers to yield ; and her surrender isolated Turkey. The hard-tried Serbians, who had faced the first shock of the war, were the first to taste the triumph of victory.

Turkey Yields.—Meanwhile, in Palestine, Allenby had with brilliant strategy pushed home his successes of the previous year. He was delayed by having to send his best troops to the West to make good the disasters of the spring, but reinforcements came to him from India, while Lawrence and his Bedouins swept round to harass the Turks from the desert on the east. In September the crucial attack was launched against the Turkish army. The Turks were completely routed. Damascus was captured on October 1st. Beirut and the other ports of the Syrian coast were occupied in turn ; Aleppo fell on October 26th. Meanwhile, the army of Mesopotamia, pressing northward, was at the gates of Mosul. On October 30th the Turks also asked for an armistice. They had collapsed as suddenly as the Bulgarians.

Austria Yields.—A still more dramatic break had also taken place in Italy. On the anniversary of Caporetto, the Italian army, with its British and French allies, once more took the offensive. It was a British contingent that led the way, crossing the Piave under Lord Cavan. At first the Austrians fought hard. But their resistance weakened at every step. Their line was broken. Their discontented subjects were in revolt. On November 4th Austria in her turn sued for peace.

German Collapse. — Germany was now left alone. But despair had at last taken possession of her people and her leaders. While the army was forced back fighting towards the Rhine, revolution broke out, first in the navy, then in the cities. The Kaiser deserted the nation whose trust he had abused, and fled to Holland. The possibility of German resistance was at an end.

The Armistice.—At dawn on November 11th the British army, in its advance, had reached Mons, where the long agony began more than four years earlier. At eleven o'clock on that day the order to cease fire was given. The Germans had signed an armistice. The war was at an end ; and all along the hundreds of miles of the fighting lines, and in every town and village of the belligerent countries, half incredulous cheers and tears and prayers welcomed the lifting of the nightmare that had overhung the world.

CHAPTER LIV

THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE

1. Versailles and the League of Nations

The Task of Pacification.—The War was over, but the difficult task of making peace remained. It was all the more difficult because too many people were thinking only of exacting vengeance for the sufferings they had endured, and the ignorant imagined that nothing remained to be done but to hang the Kaiser and to force Germany to pay the whole cost of the war. In reality, Europe had to be reconstructed ; the foundations of lasting peace had to be laid ; and the grave and real danger of a huge revolutionary upheaval had to be faced. The madness of revolution was already raging in Russia, with results more horrible than those of war. In the loosening of all bonds which followed the war, there was real danger that the madness might spread, especially if the defeated peoples were reduced to despair.

The Congress of Versailles.—To deal with these problems a great Congress of the Nations gathered at Paris and Versailles early in 1919. It was a congress of the victors : the spokesmen of the defeated States were only invited to hear and submit to their fate. But as nearly all the peoples of the world had joined in the war, at any rate in form, during its last stages—including China, Siam, the republics of Central and South America, and even the negro republics of Hayti and Liberia—the Congress of Versailles was the nearest approach to a gathering of all the nations of the earth that history had yet seen. India and the British Dominions were all directly represented. Three personalities dominated the discussions and made all the main decisions : President Wilson of America ; M. Clemenceau, the old " Tiger " Prime Minister of France ; and Mr. Lloyd George, Prime Minister of Britain. As all the allies owed vast sums of money to America, American influence was very strong ; and Wilson, who had made himself the spokesman of the demand for the permanent banishment of war, and had in a series of great speeches defined the ideals that ought to be pursued in the settlement, enjoyed an immense prestige. Unfortunately he had brought with him only members of his own party ; with the conse-

quence that the terms which were fixed by his influence became subjects of party controversy in America, and were ultimately repudiated by the American Senate.

The League of Nations.—Thanks to Wilson's insistence, it was agreed that the establishment of a League of Nations to prevent future wars should be in the forefront of the settlement, and should be embodied in all the treaties of peace. The Covenant of the League was drawn up and accepted. It pledged its members (and all the nations of the world were invited to join it) never to go to war until they had submitted the subjects in dispute either to some form of arbitral settlement, or to inquiry by the Council of the League. These pledges did not prevent war altogether. But if war was undertaken before these conditions had been fulfilled, all the member-States were to be bound to take action, if need be, against any Power which failed to observe them. The Covenant set up two governing bodies—the Assembly of the League, in which every member-State was to be represented ; and the Council, in which the Great Powers were to be permanently represented, and the lesser Powers by election.

Tasks of the League.—One of the first tasks of the League was to be disarmament by agreement. Another was to be the establishment of a world-court. A third was to be the improvement of labour conditions by international agreement. A fourth was to be the supervision of the government of backward peoples by States to which mandates had been given by the League. A multitude of undefined duties in regard to international co-operation were also imposed upon it. The first session of the League took place in 1920, after the treaties of peace were concluded. We shall trace the growth of its influence later in this chapter. But the important thing is that, at the end of the Great War, for the first time in human history, an organisation was established to deal with the common concerns of the whole world, and to prevent, if possible, future wars.

2. The Peace Treaties

The resettlement of Europe * and of the world † was embodied in a series of treaties with Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, the last of which was not completed until May 1920.

* School Atlas, Plate 21.
† School Atlas, Plate 47.

The most important of the series was the Treaty of *Versailles*, imposed upon Germany in June 1919. It will be most convenient to treat the series as a whole, and to take, first, measures of disarmament and reparation; secondly, territorial changes in Europe; and, thirdly, changes outside Europe.

Disarmament.—All the enemy Powers, but especially Germany, were compelled to submit to a drastic reduction of their armaments. Germany had to surrender her fleet: the battleships had to go to Scapa Flow for the humiliation of surrender; they were sunk by their crews in those deep waters, and the Great Fleet lies rusting at the bottom of the sea. More significant, Germany was compelled to abandon the system of compulsory military service, whereby she had trained her whole manhood to war; and was limited to a small army of 100,000 men. Similar restrictions were imposed upon the other enemy Powers. The victors pledged themselves in the treaties that this should only be the beginning of a general disarmament, which has not yet (1929) been effected. The whole of Germany west of the Rhine, together with three semi-circles of territory on its eastern bank, were occupied by French, British, and Belgian troops to ensure the fulfilment of these and other conditions of the treaty.

Reparations.—Germany and, in a less degree, the other enemy Powers were compelled to make reparation for the losses caused by the War. Germany's merchant shipping was confiscated, and divided among the Allies in proportion to their losses. Germany was required to supply large quantities of coal to France, Belgium, and Italy, and the valuable coalfield of the Saar valley was cut off from Germany for fifteen years, to make up for the damage done to the French and Belgian coalfields. In addition to all this, a colossal bill of costs was drawn up by the Allies, which Germany was required to pay. The amount was indefinite, and a Reparations Commission was appointed to decide how much should actually be exacted. This was a penalty of an altogether different order from the indemnities which had been demanded from France in 1815 or in 1870. The latter sums could be and were paid off in a limited time, but the sum demanded from Germany was so vast and indefinite that nobody could tell whether it could ever be paid.

Territorial Changes.—The territorial changes made by these treaties were of the most sweeping kind. In Europe, the treaty-makers had at their disposal (1) all the vast lands which Russia had ceded to Germany in 1917; (2) the whole of the composite

Austrian Empire, which was broken into fragments and, as an empire, disappeared from the map ; (3) certain territories taken from Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey. They proceeded to reconstruct the geography especially of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe on the basis of nationality, interpreted in terms of language, but without much reference to economic conditions.*

(1) The old dismembered State of *Poland* was restored, partly from Russian Poland, partly from Austrian Galicia, and partly from the Polish lands of Prussia—the province of Posen and the greater part of the province of West Prussia. The latter was taken largely in order to give Poland access to the sea by way of the Vistula ; and Danzig, a predominantly German town at the mouth of that river, was turned into a Free City under the control of the League of Nations. As there were many Poles in the rich province of Silesia, a plebiscite was decreed in a part of that province : it was later carried out under the direction of the League of Nations, and part of the rich Silesian coalfield was assigned to Poland.

(2) Three new States, two of which had never had a separate existence in history, were created out of what had been the Baltic provinces of Russia—*Esthonia*, *Latvia*, and *Lithuania*. *Finland* also became, for the first time, an independent republic.

(3) Bohemia, with Moravia and the country of the Slovaks (formerly part of Hungary), was turned into the new State of *Czechoslovakia*—a Slavonic State.

(4) *Rumania* was more than doubled in size by the addition of Transylvania (taken from Hungary), Bukovina, and Bessarabia. It became, in area, one of the greater States of Europe.

(5) Serbia, with which Montenegro was incorporated, was turned into a major state, by the addition of Bosnia, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Croatia, and Slavonia, all formerly parts of the Austrian Empire : this new State took the name of *Yugoslavia*.

(6) *Austria* and *Hungary*, the traditional ruling peoples of all that area, were reduced to tiny States, surrounded by their former subjects, now far more powerful than themselves.

No attempt was made to limit the armaments of these new States, except Austria and Hungary. They all preserved the system of compulsory military service, which made huge armies possible. Nor was any attempt made to prevent them from setting up high

* School Atlas, Plate 21 ; larger Atlas, Plates 94–95.

customs-barriers, and thus increasing the difficulties in the way of European trade.

(7) *Greece* was greatly expanded at the expense of Turkey and Bulgaria. She was also promised large territories on the coast of Asia Minor. But these gains were only temporary; they led to troubles to which we shall have to refer later, and which made a new settlement with Turkey necessary.

(8) In western Europe the changes were less drastic than in the east. But *France* regained Alsace and Lorraine from Germany; *Italy* acquired Trieste, with the peninsula of Istria, and the valley of Trent, including a considerable German population; while the results of the old Danish war of 1864 were partially reversed by a provision which decreed a plebiscite in the province of *Schleswig*, the north of which voted in favour of annexation to Denmark.

Settlement outside Europe.—Turning next to the lands outside Europe, the chief results of the treaties were that Germany was deprived of the whole of her colonies, and that Turkey lost almost all her empire outside Asia Minor. With the exception of the German islands in the North Pacific, which were given to Japan, all these territories were taken by France, by Britain, and by Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.* In Africa *France* got the bulk of the Cameroons and part of Togoland; *Britain* got German East Africa (Tanganyika), together with strips of Togoland and the Cameroons; *South Africa* got German South-West Africa. In the Pacific, *Australia* got German New Guinea, and *New Zealand* Samoa. From the Turkish Empire France took *Syria*, while Britain obtained a protectorate over *Palestine* (now declared to be a Jewish National Home), over *Mesopotamia*, and over the partially desert region known as *Trans-Jordan*. *Arabia* became independent.

Mandates.—In regard to all these extra-European annexations, however, a new principle was established. Although the League of Nations had nothing to do with their apportionment, these lands were all declared to be held under "mandates" from the League; and their new rulers were required to observe certain principles laid down in the Mandates Clauses of the League Covenant, and to make regular reports to the League as to the administration of these lands. Thus the organised community of civilisation accepted some sort of vague responsibility for the government of backward peoples. There

* School Atlas, Plate 47.

was, however no suggestion that the colonising Powers should place their existing territories in backward areas under League Mandates.

A Drastic Settlement.—In the whole course of modern history, no defeated States have ever been so severely dealt with as Germany, Austria, Hungary and Turkey were by this series of treaties ; and no conference that has ever been held has made more drastic rearrangements. Two features of the settlement marked a new departure in international politics. One was the establishment of the League of Nations, which may mark the beginning of a new era. The other was the attempt to apply in a logical way the national principle as the basis of political geography. Both of these may provide the foundations for an era of permanent peace, so far as Europe is concerned. But the settlement left many problems unsolved, and the ten years since the end of the War have been years of incessant difficulty. Peace was not forged in 1919 ; it has been for ten years, and is still, on the anvil.

3. International Relations Since the War

Work of the League of Nations.—Many people hoped and even expected that the institution of the League of Nations would of itself suffice to establish secure peace. They were disappointed. The League was not, for some years, allowed to deal with questions of real difficulty. The execution of the peace treaties was kept by the leading allied Powers in their own hands ; they acted through a Council of Ambassadors, sitting in Paris. Moreover, the League was seriously weakened by the fact that it did not include three of the greatest Powers in the world—the United States, which (having rejected Wilson and his party) refused to have anything to do with it ; Germany, which was not admitted a member until 1926 ; and Russia, which, under its Bolshevik government, had in effect declared war against Western civilisation as a whole. Nevertheless it achieved much good work. It helped to solve several minor questions which might have led to war. It set up a *Permanent Court of International Justice* at the Hague, which began to be used for the settlement of international disputes capable of being decided by lawyers. It established an *International Labour Office* which drew up conventions about hours and conditions of labour that were submitted to the various governments for acceptance. It dealt successfully with several very difficult problems due to the war, such as the financial

disorganisation of Austria and Hungary, and the repatriation of people exiled from lands that had changed hands. Year by year its annual Assemblies rose in importance. The minor Powers valued the voice in international affairs which it gave to them ; and from 1924 onwards the ministers of the major Powers found it essential to take its proceedings seriously. It was shaping a world public opinion which even the greatest Powers dared not disregard.

Disarmament.—But on one vital issue the League did not succeed in making any real progress during the first ten years of its existence. This was the question of disarmament. None of the victor-Powers save Britain, and none of the new States, was prepared to abandon compulsory military service. Though all agreed that there ought to be disarmament, nobody would move first, and there was no agreement as to the scale on which disarmament should take place. The only successful move was made, not by the League, but by a conference at Washington summoned by the United States (1921), in which the leading naval Powers agreed to cut down their biggest battleships and cruisers in agreed proportions. But no agreement could be obtained, either then or in a later conference in 1928, as to the reduction of smaller types of warships, such as cruisers and submarines ; and no scheme for the reduction of land forces was even discussed. Thus the pledge given to the disarmed enemy Powers that the compulsory reduction of their forces should be followed by an all-round reduction was not kept ; and ten years after the end of the war, the armed forces of Europe were practically as great as they had been on the eve of the War. The nations would not disarm until they felt secure. Various plans to give a sense of security were worked out—a Treaty of Mutual Assistance in 1923, and an elaborate document known as the Protocol in 1924 ; but they came to nothing.

4. Post-War Problems

The Russian Revolution.—There were several questions which kept Europe, or parts of Europe, in a state of alarm and uncertainty. The first was the revolution in Russia. The revolutionary Socialists (or Bolsheviks) who had seized power in 1917, were a small minority of the people. But they had suppressed all freedom of speech, and were engaged in ruthlessly destroying the old ruling and educated classes. They had abolished private property, confiscated all capital, whether it belonged to Russians or to foreigners,

and repudiated all debts due to foreign governments. For a time the Western governments, and especially Britain, gave aid to the conservative forces which were trying to resist the Bolsheviks. The only results of this were, firstly, to enlist Russian patriotism on the side of the Revolution, so that Trotsky's Red Army was able to crush all opposition ; and, secondly, to convince those who were favourable to the Bolshevik ideas in other countries that the misery from which Russia was suffering was not due to the methods of the revolution but to the action of " capitalist " governments.

External Influence of Bolshevism.—For a time it seemed likely that the Bolshevik movement would spread to other countries. There were temporary outbreaks in Hungary and in Bulgaria ; there was an upheaval in Italy, where some factories were seized by the workpeople, and this provided the occasion for the establishment of a reactionary Fascist government under Mussolini ; and there were some fears of similar movements in Germany, where for a time economic distress was acute. The Bolshevik government, which desired to bring about a world-revolution, was, moreover, aggressive. In 1919 it created trouble in Finland, and in 1920 it attacked Poland, and French aid had to be sent to repel the attack. It also strove to stir up revolts in various parts of Asia, notably in China. There were frequent rumours of an alliance between Russia and Germany. When the Bolsheviks were left to themselves, the inherent weakness of their system was displayed, and the chance of an extension of their methods diminished. But their underground activity in all countries continued, and helped to create a feeling of insecurity and unrest which made it difficult for Europe to settle down.

Turkish Nationalism.—A second cause of disturbance was the growth of a nationalist movement among the Turks, fed by anger at the way in which the Turkish Empire had been partitioned. In 1922 the Greeks, who had tried to secure the territories promised them in Asia Minor, were driven into the sea ; and the Turkish nationalist government, under Mustapha Kemal, showed so much energy that for a time a renewal of war seemed inevitable. The Treaty of Sèvres had to be abandoned ; and a new treaty, which gave back to Turkey much of the European territory she had lost, had to be concluded at Lausanne in 1923.

Reaction and Nationalism.—A third cause of unrest was the breakdown of democracy in several countries, and the rise, in its place, of military dictatorships. The most remarkable of these was

the Fascist Dictatorship of Mussolini ; there were similar reactions in Spain and (for a time) in Greece. These governments were apt to be self-assertive, and they caused nervousness among their neighbours. All over Europe, indeed, the nationalist spirit was rampant, more especially in the new States. It showed itself not only in large armaments, but in high tariffs, which greatly impeded economic recovery. Determined to manufacture within their own boundaries as much as possible of their needs, these governments made their people pay higher prices for home-made products in order to keep out foreign goods ; and therefore impoverished them, and left them less to spend. The tariff barriers of Europe were far more serious after the War than before it. This was bad for all the trading countries ; but Britain, which exists by export trade, was hardest hit.

Uncertainty in Germany.—A fourth cause of insecurity was the uncertainty as to what was likely to happen in Germany. After the Revolution of 1918, Germany had set up a democratic Republic. But it was threatened from two sides, so long as the country continued to be in a state of economic chaos : there was a danger of Bolshevik revolution, and there was a still greater danger of royalist reaction. These dangers were bound to continue until the country settled down and got to work again.

5. Reparations and Debts

Reparations.—The chief cause of unsettlement was the question of Reparations. There were repeated conferences to consider how much Germany could be made to pay, but they were inconclusive, and the demand remained vast and indefinite. The Allies expected colossal payments. These payments could only be made in German goods. But the Allies did not want to have their markets flooded with German goods. For example, when vast quantities of German coal had to be sent free into France and Italy, this was very bad for the coal-trade everywhere, especially in Britain. To pay for the coal, and to get hold of the vast quantities of English, French, and American money which were required by the Reparations Commission, the German Government had to issue immense quantities of paper money. German money consequently declined in value ; and the more it declined, the more had to be printed, until in the end a *mark* (once worth a shilling) came to be worth perhaps a millionth part of a penny. Trade became impossible under such

conditions ; but it was only from the profits of trade that the means could be got to meet the demands.

France in the Ruhr.—In 1923 a crisis came. Failing to receive payment in full, the French Government sent an army to occupy the great industrial district of the Ruhr. But you can't make a bankrupt pay by prodding him with bayonets. The only result was to make things worse, by stopping production in Germany's richest industrial area, and by arousing an intense bitterness which would have led to war if Germany had not been disarmed and defenceless. Complete chaos came in the finances of Germany. The paper mark became valueless. One result of this was that the German national debt was wiped out : people who had lent (say) 20,000 marks to the Government found that their 20,000 marks were reduced to the value of a fraction of a farthing ; and all those who lived on invested money were reduced to beggary.

The Dawes Settlement.—These events brought a return to sanity. An International Commission of experts (the Dawes Commission) was set up to determine how much it was physically possible for Germany to pay. The greatly reduced figure which they arrived at was agreed upon in 1924. Elaborate arrangements were made to secure regular payment. The ruined German currency was cancelled, and a new currency was started, based upon the value of gold. Thereafter, Germany was able to pay regularly ; although there is some ground for thinking that even the Dawes figure was too high, and that Germany has only been able to pay by borrowing from America, a process which cannot go on indefinitely.

Allied Debts.—Meanwhile, another cause of dislocation was at work in the Allied Debts. All the allies on the Continent (including Russia) owed vast sums to Britain and America, mainly for the goods supplied during the War ; Britain also owed a large debt to America, which would not have been incurred but that she had had to finance the other allies. Britain took the view that all these debts should be cancelled. America refused to accept this view. Thereupon, Britain announced (in what was known as the Balfour note) that she would only ask France, Italy, and the rest for as much as (when added to her share of German reparations) would enable her to pay her debt to America. In 1923 she made an agreement with America as to the terms on which her debt should be repaid, over a period of sixty-two years. America then made similar agreements with the other allies, to whom she granted much more

favourable terms than to Britain. Britain then made agreements with the other allies (except Russia), whereby their payments to her were fixed at just sufficient to cover, with Germany's contribution, the British payment to America. Britain will therefore receive no contribution whatsoever, either from German reparations or from the allies, towards her vast outlay in the War from her own resources. Eventually, either directly or indirectly, the reparations paid by Germany will mainly go to America.

The Locarno Treaty.—All these problems have made the settlement of Europe after the War extraordinarily difficult and slow. It cannot yet be said that Europe has achieved solidly organised peace. Her peoples, because of their sense of instability and insecurity, are still suspicious of one another, and are still spending upon armaments a great deal more than they can afford. Nevertheless, real progress has been made. The most striking proof of this progress is supplied by what is known as the Locarno agreement, which was concluded in 1926, as a consequence of the Dawes settlement, and which was followed by the admission of Germany to the League of Nations. By this agreement Germany on the one side, and France and Belgium on the other, solemnly agreed that they would never go to war over the frontier that separates them, but would settle any differences by arbitration ; and Britain and Italy guaranteed this agreement by pledging themselves to join forces against any Power which breaks it. A similar, but less complete, agreement was also made in regard to Germany's eastern frontier. The Locarno Treaty, which (if it is effective) banishes war for ever on the frontier on which war has raged most often during modern history, is a landmark in the organisation of peace. But as yet no other nations have made Locarno agreements on their own account.

CHAPTER LV

THE BRITISH EMPIRE AFTER THE WAR

1. The Tropical Empire

Mandated Territories.—The first and most obvious effect of the War upon the British Empire was that substantial additions were made to its already enormous extent. In form, indeed, these lands

are "mandated territories," and are therefore not strictly British lands, but League of Nations lands administered by Britain. In fact, however, most of these territories are treated exactly like other possessions, except that an annual report concerning them is laid before the League.

East Africa.—The addition of German East Africa (Tanganyika) to the earlier British possessions of Uganda, Kenya, and Nyasaland created a continuous group of colonial possessions in the uplands of East Africa which formed a mighty empire in themselves, and which may ultimately be grouped together in a new federation. In these lands, and especially in Kenya, very difficult racial problems arise from the fact that a substantial number of white settlers have made their homes in the highlands, while there is also a large population of Indian immigrants alongside of the native population. The difficulty of adjusting the rights and claims of these varied elements has led to a great deal of discussion and controversy since the War, and it cannot be said that a satisfactory solution has yet been found.

Dominion Dependencies.—South-West Africa, New Guinea and Samoa are respectively administered by the governments of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, subject to the League of Nations. These Dominions have therefore become *imperia in imperio*, and this has involved a change in the character of the Empire. The policy to be pursued in regard to subject peoples is no longer a matter wholly regulated by the imperial government; yet no method of consultation on these matters between the mother-country and the Dominions has yet been devised.

Palestine.—The two chief territories taken from the Turkish Empire—Palestine and Mesopotamia—stand in a peculiar position. In the case of Palestine, the Governor is appointed by the British Crown. But he is charged with the special duty of administering Palestine in such a way that it may become a "Jewish National Home," and there has been a considerable immigration of Jews, whose work has begun to restore prosperity to the country. In the normal course of events it might be expected that Palestine would become a self-governing community, and that the British protectorate would soon be unnecessary. But the position is complicated by the presence of a large native population of Arabs, who resent the coming of the Jews; and the relations between the two peoples are apt to be so strained that the British administration has a very difficult and delicate task of mediation between them.

Iraq.—Mesopotamia (Iraq) stands upon a different footing. Here a native Arab administration, with an Arab royal line and a representative parliament, has been set up ; and it is the declared intention of the British Government to leave the country to itself as early as possible. This was settled by a treaty concluded in 1922 ; and in 1923 a parliamentary constitution came into force in the land of the Garden of Eden. In the meanwhile, however, it has been necessary to protect Iraq against a possible attack from the Turks on the one hand, and from the Arabs of Arabia on the other. A sharp controversy as to whether the district of Mosul, on the north, was to be included in Iraq or not was referred in 1926 to the League of Nations, which gave its award in favour of Iraq, but there is always a possibility that this territory may still be claimed by Turkey. At a considerable cost, therefore, a British force has been maintained in Iraq.

2. New Relations with the Dominions

Foreign Policy and Defence.—The War necessarily brought about a change in the relations between the Dominions and the mother-country, which was made clear in the years following the peace. Throughout their history the Dominions had been content to leave questions of foreign policy and defence to be settled at Westminster, because the affairs of Europe seemed remote to them, and the risks of war appeared to be negligible. They had sent contingents to the South African War, without demanding to be consulted about the events that led up to it, or the settlement which followed it ; but that was an intra-imperial affair. They had been admitted to a gradually increasing degree of consultation in the years preceding the War ; and, but for the fullness with which foreign policy and defence questions were discussed at the Imperial and Defence Conferences before the War, it is doubtful whether the participation of the Dominions would have been as whole-hearted as it actually was. But then they had been called upon to throw their whole strength into a gigantic struggle, and they had nobly answered the call, making immense sacrifices of life and money. It was impossible that they should ever again regard foreign affairs as indifferent to them, or consent permanently to a system which excluded them from any effective share in discussing matters of policy which might involve them in war.

The Dominions and the League.—During the course of the War the Dominion Prime Ministers and representatives of India were added to the War Cabinet, and played their part in determining war policy. When the Peace Conference was summoned, all the Dominions and India were separately represented as individual States ; and some thought that this implied the break-up of the British Empire. When the League of Nations was formed, they became individual members of the Assembly ; but on the Council it was the British Empire, not Britain alone, that was represented, and Dominion members might, under certain circumstances, take part in the Council's proceedings.

Causes of Difficulty.—If the League of Nations had been the arena for all discussions on international relations, the Dominions might have felt that this arrangement met their needs. But many of the most important questions were settled outside the League, and this led to difficulties. On at least three occasions the necessity of finding some solution for this problem presented itself. In 1922, when Britain was almost involved in a new war with Turkey, the Dominions took alarm ; but the crisis passed off. In 1923–1924, when the Treaty of Lausanne was concluded with Turkey, the Dominions were not consulted, though some of them had played a very great part in the war with the Turks. They felt, not without reason, that some of the terms of the Treaty might in the future involve them in war, and they resented their exclusion from the discussions which led up to it. Again, in 1926, when the Treaty of Locarno was negotiated, Britain alone became a guarantor of the Treaty, and the Dominions were expressly excluded. Yet if war should result under the treaty, either the Dominions would be automatically involved, or the British Empire would cease to exist as a political unit.

A Change in Process.—It appeared, therefore, that either some method of continuous consultation on foreign policy must be devised, or that each self-governing member of the Empire must be left free to pursue an independent policy ; in which case the British Empire would become only a very loose alliance. No serious attempt has been made to work out any system of continuous consultation. The tendency has been rather in the opposite direction. Canada has appointed a separate ambassador of her own at Washington, and the example has since been followed by the Irish Free State. The Imperial Conference of 1927 issued a definition of the relations

between the members of the Empire which in fact implied that they are separate States who only act together by goodwill, and are free to throw off their allegiance at any moment.

Thus the British Empire, since the War, has been drifting into a new stage in its development.

3. The Problem of India

India and the War.—In India the War brought to a crisis the nationalist movement which had been growing steadily in strength for a generation. The first result of the outbreak of war was to still all the vehement controversies which had been raging during the preceding years. There was a remarkable outburst of loyalty to the Empire, so strong that it was possible to withdraw most of the British troops maintained in India, for service in one field of war or another. Splendid offers of help came from the princes; and immense forces were recruited, especially in the warlike province of the Punjab. For the first time in the long history of India, Indian troops saw service in many parts of the world.

The Nationalist Movement.—But as the War wore on, the demand for an expansion of self-government rose again. It was strengthened by the fact that the Allies claimed to be fighting for democracy, and by the feeling that if Indians were capable of fighting for the Empire, they were capable of undertaking the full rights of citizenship. In various forms the demand became louder. At length, in 1917, it was announced in the British Parliament that the time had come for a great step forward towards Indian self-government. The Secretary of State, Mr. E. S. Montagu, went out to India, and in conjunction with the Viceroy held a series of conferences with Indians in all the provinces. The result was a new scheme of government, which was embodied in the India Act of 1919.

The Scheme of Dyarchy.—Under this plan, there was to be a large elected majority in each of the provincial legislatures—(the Indian provinces are as big as European States). Certain subjects were to be "transferred" to the control of Indian ministers responsible to the legislature, the "reserved" subjects being retained in the control of the Governor and the Civil Service. In the event of deadlock, large powers were given to the Governor, and, in the last resort, the system could be suspended. This system was known as "Dyarchy." It formed an experiment, to which there had

hitherto been no parallel, in the direction of blending "responsible" and non-responsible government. At the same time the powers of the legislative body in the supreme government of India as a whole were substantially increased; but in this sphere "responsibility" was not introduced, among other reasons, because the Government of India has to deal not only with the British provinces but with the native States.

A Period of Trouble.—The new system had an unfortunate beginning. Before it was initiated, serious troubles broke out, in the spring of 1919, largely over the proposals included in what were known as the "Rowlatt Acts," which made special provisions for dealing with seditious cases. A violent agitation led to an outbreak of riots and even rebellion in the Punjab, in which a number of lives were lost. These disturbances were put down, but the way in which the situation was handled in the turbulent city of Amritsar (Punjab), where machine guns were turned upon a prohibited meeting, aroused fierce resentment, and stimulated the growth of a strong anti-British movement. The centre of this movement was Gandhi, a saintly Hindu who dreamed of a return to the pristine simplicity of primitive India, and preached "non-violent non-co-operation" with the British Government, or, in other words, a peaceful boycott of the British and all their works, including the new scheme of government. For some years Gandhi exercised an extraordinary influence over the Indian people, and under him the political movement spread even to the mass of the peasantry, hitherto unaffected by it. At the same time there was profound unrest among the Mohammedans, who deeply resented the downfall of the power of the Turks, for which they held the British Government responsible. The two movements to some extent coalesced, and an extremely difficult situation was created. To add to all these troubles, a war broke out with Afghanistan (1919), which was in part due to the general unrest that was simmering throughout the Moslem world; but the restless activities of the Russian Bolsheviks also stimulated it. There was hard fighting before peace was restored on the frontiers, Afghanistan being left in complete independence.

The New System at Work.—It was in these conditions that the new system of Indian government had to be set on foot. It would in any case have been difficult to work a system so novel. It could not work well in the midst of all this seething unrest. The majority of Indians held aloof from it for several years, and although

this perhaps made things easier for the moment, it meant that the system could not take root. From the first there were loud demands, even from the most moderate of the Indian parties, that the system should be enlarged in the direction of complete responsible government. The Act had provided that the scheme should be revised at intervals of ten years ; but few Indians were content to wait so long.

Gradual Appeasement.—Gradually, however, the excitement died down, especially under the patient and tactful administration of Lord Reading as Viceroy (1921–1926). Gandhi was arrested, and the non-co-operation movement which he had started broke down. Sharp differences of opinion emerged among various groups of Indians as to the way in which the constitution should be revised, the Mohammedans and the lower castes being afraid lest they should be left under the control of a Hindu majority, while the Princes regarded with distaste the growth of a democratic movement which threatened their authority. In 1928 the British Government appointed a Commission, under Sir John Simon, to carry out inquiries preparatory to the promised revision of the constitution in 1929.

Economic Changes.—Meanwhile, Indian nationalist opinion had found another expression in a movement for economic independence. Indian industry had been greatly stimulated during the War, when Britain was unable to send her usual volume of manufactured exports. The cotton, coal, and iron and steel industries in particular had made great advances. They were encouraged by the gradual development of a protective system which especially struck at British imports. Throughout the nineteenth century Britain had used her power over India to maintain a system of free imports, and, in particular, she had insisted that when duties were imposed for revenue purposes upon British cotton goods, there should be a countervailing excise duty on Indian cotton goods. This had to be definitely abandoned during the War ; and in the following years there was a gradual increase in the number of duties levied on foreign imports. India, like other countries in which the nationalist spirit was strong, aimed at being self-sufficing.

4. Troubles in Egypt

The same nationalist spirit which was at work all over the world, showed itself in a very difficult form in Egypt. Egypt was, of course, not a part of the British Empire before the War, though her

government was under British control ; she was nominally a vassal of Turkey ; her finances and her trade were largely controlled by foreign financial interests ; and separate courts were maintained for the trial of Europeans, who enjoyed certain privileges.

Egyptian Nationalism.—When the War broke out, and Turkey joined the German side, it was impossible that the legal position created by the Turkish suzerainty should survive, since it made every Egyptian legally an enemy. Accordingly a British protectorate was declared, and the Khedive took the title of King. During the War Egypt was, in effect, under military government, and there were always large British and Indian forces in the country, at first for the protection of the Suez Canal, and later because Egypt was the base for the invasion of Palestine. But throughout this period a nationalist movement was growing in strength, and as soon as the War came to an end, it broke out into a furious agitation, led by an able but impracticable enthusiast, Zaghlul Pasha. The Egyptians would not be content with self-government under a British protectorate. They would be content with nothing short of complete independence ; and violent disturbances broke out in 1919. A special Commission, under the presidency of Lord Milner, was sent out to study the problem (December 1919). It was favourable to the aspirations of the Egyptians, and was anxious to reach any practicable accommodation, but the Egyptians would listen to no proposals of compromise.

Causes of Difficulty.—There were three things which the British Government held to be essential. The first was adequate protection for the Suez Canal, which could not safely be left to a new, unstable, and possibly irresponsible government. The second was the need for safeguards for the rights and property of European residents in Egypt. The third was the maintenance of efficient government in the Sudan, which had been conquered mainly by British arms, and brought to prosperity by British officials. But all these requirements seemed to the Egyptian leaders to be restrictions on their national freedom ; and the Nile, by which Egypt lived, draws its waters from the Sudan, so that the very existence of the country depends upon the wise control of the Nile-flow in that region. Eventually, in 1922, the independence of Egypt was recognised, subject to these three conditions. A British Commissioner still lives at Cairo to regulate these matters, and a British garrison controls the Suez Canal.

Continued Troubles.—The settlement of 1922, however, did not bring peace. In 1924 the election of the Egyptian parliament gave a sweeping majority to Zaghlul and the Nationalist extremists. They resented the powers which the British Government still claimed, and, in particular, demanded that the Sudan should be recognised as part of the Egyptian empire, under the absolute control of the Egyptian Government. There were disturbances among the Egyptian troops in the Sudan. In Egypt there were a number of outrages against British subjects, culminating in the murder of the Sirdar, Sir Lee Stack (1925). Thereupon the British Government took firm action. It demanded the trial and punishment of the murderers, who were eventually executed. It flatly refused the Egyptian demand of sovereignty over the Sudan; Egyptian officials and Egyptian troops were ordered out of that province, and a separate Sudanese Defence Force was organised.

The troubles in India and Egypt have afforded evidence of the difficulty of adapting Western ideas and methods of government to the needs of oriental peoples. It cannot be said that in either country a working solution of the problem has yet been found; and the relations between the governments of the West and the peoples of the East, among whom the nationalist aspiration is stirring, remain among the most difficult problems not only of the British Empire but of the world.

CHAPTER LVI

BRITAIN SINCE THE WAR

1. British Politics at the End of the War

Post-War Hopes.—During the last stages of the War, and especially when victory came in sight, a large part of the British people began to form glowing anticipations of the happiness that was to come with peace. The Germans were to be made to pay the whole cost of the war. War was to be banished for ever from the face of the earth. The brotherhood which war had created was to continue in peace-time, and the gigantic efforts of which the nation had been shown to be capable, when turned to the tasks of peace, were to banish slums and poverty and to bring about an era of universal prosperity. Britain was to be made, in the words of the Prime Minister, "a land

fit for heroes to live in." It was a noble aspiration. But it did not sufficiently take account of the immense difficulties which the War had created, or of the impossibility of maintaining in peace that single-minded unity of purpose and opinion which had made the colossal war-effort possible. The greatness of these expectations, and the inevitable disillusionment which followed, added to the difficulty of the first trying years that followed the cessation of the War.

The Situation in 1918.—The Parliament which was sitting in 1918 had been elected in 1910 ; there ought to have been a new election in 1915, but this was impossible while war was raging, and the existence of Parliament was therefore prolonged until the end of the War. In this Parliament Conservatives and Liberals were evenly balanced, and there were also substantial bodies of Irish Nationalist and Labour members. The Government was a coalition of all parties, under the Premiership of Mr. Lloyd George. But a large section of Liberals, following Mr. Asquith, stood aloof and critical. At the end of the War the Labour members of the Cabinet withdrew. The Coalition therefore became predominantly Conservative, though the Prime Minister and some of his leading colleagues were Liberals.

Legislative Work.—During the last two years of this Parliament a good deal of legislation preparatory for the post-war era was carried. The most important of these Acts was a *Franchise Act*, which for the first time gave the vote to many women over thirty ; it also widened the franchise for men so as to include all over twenty-one ; and a redistribution of seats was carried out. The number of new voters added by the Act was much larger than had been added by any previous Act : the fortunes of Britain were in the future to rest with democracy more fully than ever before. A second important Act was the *Education Act* introduced by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher. Its aim was to give to the democracy a fuller training, especially by providing continuation schools for adolescents ; though this was only a part of a far-reaching scheme of reform.

The Labour Party.—In 1918 the Labour Party adopted a new constitution, and came forward as a serious competitor for the control of power. The strength of the trade unions had grown by leaps and bounds during the War—it more than doubled between 1914 and 1918, and the numbers went on growing until 1920, when they reached a total of over 8,000,000. Nearly all the trade unions were affiliated to the Labour Party, and subscribed to its funds. By

its new constitution the party definitely adopted Socialism, and defined the nationalisation of all the means of production as its supreme aim. The Labour Party believed in the possibility of a sweeping reconstruction of society; and a manifesto, full of glowing aspirations, which it issued under the title of "Labour and the New Social Order," drew to it the support of myriads of eager and hopeful people.

The Election of 1918.—As soon as the War was over, a General Election took place on the new franchise. The Coalition appealed to the country to support the men who had won the War, and obtained an overwhelming majority; the Labour Party came back with sixty-two members; but the independent section of the Liberal Party was reduced to twenty-six, and the Nationalist Party was almost wiped out of existence. For the next four years the Government was omnipotent.

2. The Problems of Peace

The Transition to Peace.—It had been anticipated that there would be great difficulty in bringing about the transition to peace conditions, since millions of fighting men would have to be reabsorbed into industry, the old channels of trade had been diverted for four years, and the pledge to restore trade union customs would have to be honoured. The difficulties turned out to be less than had been feared. Gratuities to the troops on demobilisation helped them to find new niches; and a sudden and immense boom in trade, due to the fact that the whole world was short of goods, eased the situation for the first two years. This sudden boom came to an end in the autumn of 1920, and was succeeded by an equally sudden and profound depression. While the boom lasted, prices soared up, and wages followed them; everybody enjoyed an unreal prosperity; and in some industries, notably in cotton, factories were sold at wildly enhanced values, and reorganised under the load of heavy capital charges which later crippled them.

Reconstructive Work.—The Government did not allow itself to be wholly absorbed in the difficult task of negotiating peace abroad. It set itself to tackle the work of reconstruction. New ministries—of Health, of Labour, of Transport, of Mines—were instituted. A great conference of employers and workers, representing the whole range of industry, was summoned to discuss the

methods of attaining co-operation, efficiency and justice (1919). The Ministry of Labour set to work to persuade all the chief industries to organise themselves under Joint Industrial Councils, on the lines laid down by the Whitley Committee on Industrial Relations which had been set up during the War ; while in the unorganised and low-paid industries, Trade Boards were instituted in large numbers to bring about improvements in wages and conditions. The Ministry of Health set on foot gigantic schemes for the rehousing of the working classes, and for making good the deficiency of houses which had been caused by the cessation of building during the War. But these activities were soon to be impeded by the deep depression of trade which struck the country in 1920.

Old Controversies.—Parliament had also to decide what was to be done about two great controversial measures which had been carried under the Parliament Act before the War, but had been suspended when hostilities began. These were the disestablishment of the Welsh Church, and Irish Home Rule. Both had been bitterly resisted by the Conservatives. Now that the Conservatives formed the predominant element in the Coalition, there had to be some compromise.

The Irish Problem.—The Welsh Church was disestablished, but it got somewhat more favourable terms. The Irish problem was more difficult, because the views of Ulster and the South of Ireland were irreconcilable. Moreover, during the War, the extremist Sinn Fein party had grown to great strength in Ireland. In 1916, at a critical period of the War, there had actually been an open rebellion in Dublin ; and although it was suppressed, it had given a great stimulus to the Sinn Fein movement, which rapidly reduced the older Nationalist Party to insignificance. The Nationalists almost disappeared in the election of 1918 ; but the seventy-three Sinn Feiners who were elected in their place refused to attend, or to recognise in any way the authority of the British Parliament.

Civil War.—The situation thus created was an extraordinarily difficult one. In 1920 the Government tried to meet it by setting up two parliaments, one for the six Protestant counties of north-eastern Ireland, the other for the rest of Ireland ; there were provisions for common action, and for ultimate combination. But while Northern Ireland set up its Parliament under the Act, Southern Ireland, led by the Sinn Fein party, refused to have anything to do with the scheme, but broke into open rebellion, declared Ireland

independent, and elected a President of the Irish Republic, and a representative body called Dail Eireann. For two years a hideous civil war raged in the unhappy island ; loyalists were killed, or their houses burned ; anarchy seemed to have come. The Government tried to deal with this situation by measures of reprisal, and a special force of ex-soldiers was raised for the purpose, known from their uniforms as the Black-and-Tans. But this only made things worse, and brought feeling on both sides to an intensity of bitterness.

The Irish Free State. — At length, in 1921, the Prime Minister intervened, and persuaded the Sinn Fein leaders to negotiate with him. After difficult negotiations, a Treaty was signed, whereby Southern Ireland, under the name of the Irish Free State, was recognised as having "dominion status" under the British Crown, and proceeded to draw up its own constitution.* The more extreme Sinn Feiners, led by Eamon de Valera, the "President of the Irish Republic," refused to accept even this solution, or to agree to the maintenance of any connection with Britain. For a time civil war continued to rage in Ireland, between those who accepted and those who repudiated the treaty ; but gradually the country settled down under the new regime. Thus, thirty-five years after Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill, self-government was granted to Ireland in a form far more sweeping than Ireland would gratefully have accepted in 1886. Naturally British Conservatives, who had fiercely opposed Home Rule for all these years, were shocked by this conclusion ; and their satisfaction with the Coalition Government waned rapidly.

3. Industrial Unrest

Strike Fever.—Meanwhile, there were acute labour troubles in England and Scotland. From 1919 to 1926 strikes, in many industries, were more frequent and more prolonged than ever before. This was partly due to the great expectations which were widely held ; partly to the consciousness of power which filled the trade unions, in view of their vast growth and large funds. The chief centres of unrest were the railwaymen, the transport workers, and the coal-miners, all of whom could hold up the nation's economic life, and by using this power felt they could achieve great things.

* See School Atlas, Plate 37*b*.

A Triple Alliance of these powerful unions was formed (1919). They even tried to dictate to the Government, setting up a Council of Action (1920), to threaten a general strike if the supposed policy of the Government in regard to Russia was not altered ; and, although this came to nothing, the menace of a general strike continued to be a bugbear for some years.

The Railways and the Mines.—In 1919 there was a strike on all the railways, and for some days the ordinary methods of transport were completely dislocated. It was brought to an end by a settlement negotiated by the Prime Minister, one important element in which was the establishment of an elaborate system of negotiation and conciliation on the railways, embodied in an Act of Parliament. In the same year (1919) the miners put forward large demands, including the reduction of their working-day to seven hours, an increase of wages, and, in the background, the nationalisation of the mines. A Commission, presided over by Justice Sankey, was set up to inquire into these matters. On the recommendation of a majority of its members, a Seven Hours' Act was passed, and the miners' wages were increased. On the wider issue the Commission presented four reports, two of which (whose combined supporters had a majority of one) recommended Nationalisation. The Government declined to act on this, but passed a Mines Act (1920) establishing an elaborate system of representation and conciliation, which first the miners and then the mine-owners refused to work. In the autumn of 1920 there was a short strike, and in the next year (1921) a very prolonged stoppage in the mines, which for some months gravely interfered with every industry that depended upon coal. The dispute was terminated by the adoption of a new mode of fixing wages, based upon a division of the proceeds in agreed proportions between labour and capital.

Industrial Depression. — While these controversies were raging, a wave of industrial depression struck the country (1920), and the number of unemployed men suddenly leaped up to unheard-of figures, which were, of course, gravely increased by the coal stoppage. It was generally believed that this depression would be only temporary, and that it was mainly due to the confusion of foreign currencies, and to the adverse influence of unrest in the great Eastern markets of India and China. These were unquestionably important factors, though (as we shall see later) there were deeper causes at work. The Government had to face this emergency. It cut down its expenditure drastically, and some of its reform schemes (notably education and

housing) were suddenly abridged. It extended the unemployment insurance scheme to cover practically the whole range of industry, and made special provision for giving benefits to workers who had not paid the required number of premiums. It started a scheme of giving government credits to exporters, to help them in overcoming the difficulties of foreign trade. It made grants to public bodies and advances to private firms to enable them to undertake useful work. It also passed a Safeguarding of Industries Act to protect industries that were seriously threatened by the competition of countries with a falling currency ; but this device was found to be of very little avail for meeting that particular difficulty.

4. Ministerial Changes and Party Vicissitudes

The Election of 1922.—In 1922 the Conservatives decided to terminate their alliance with Mr. Lloyd George and his Liberal colleagues, and the Coalition came to an end. At the subsequent election, the Conservatives obtained a majority over all parties ; the Labour Party increased its strength to 138 ; and the two sections of Liberals mustered between them 117 seats, though their relations were strained. Mr. Bonar Law, who had led the Conservative wing of the Coalition during the War, had appealed to the country with a promise of tranquillity. His hope was that if there was a cessation of meddling both by Government and by organised labour, things would come right of themselves. The two chief events of Mr. Bonar Law's brief tenure of power were, first, the conclusion of an agreement with America whereby Britain undertook to pay her debt without regard to the payments made to her by the other allies ; and, secondly, the occupation of the Ruhr by France, which delayed the recovery of European trade, but was, for the moment, good for the British coal trade, because the production of coal in the Ruhr almost ceased. Unhappily, Mr. Bonar Law was compelled to resign by the illness from which he soon afterwards died.

The Election of 1923.—His place as Prime Minister was taken (1923) by Mr. Stanley Baldwin, who had risen very rapidly to the front rank in politics. Obsessed by the continuance of unemployment at a high level—the figures had not sunk below 1,000,000 for more than three years—Mr. Baldwin announced that in his view the only cure lay in Protection, and declined to bear the responsibility for government unless he could be released from the pledge given by

Mr. Bonar Law not to introduce protective measures. He therefore asked for a dissolution. The election put the Conservatives in a minority, though they were more numerous (258) than either of the other parties, who numbered, respectively, the Labour Party 191, and the Liberal Party 158. Defeated on a vote of no confidence, Mr. Baldwin resigned (February 1924); and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, as leader of the larger of the opposition parties, was called upon to form a ministry.

The Labour Government.—The Labour Party thus for the first time assumed office. But it had no majority; and although it held its position in virtue of Liberal votes, it made no attempt to come to any agreement or working arrangement with the Liberal Party. Its position was therefore very precarious. It had appealed to the country largely on the ground that it had a "positive remedy" for unemployment, but it did not, during its term of office, make any proposals on this head. Its only important legislative achievement was a Housing Act, to increase the subsidies offered for the erection of working-class houses. In foreign affairs, Mr. MacDonald was able to contribute to the settlement of the reparations question by obtaining an agreement on the Dawes Report. He also proposed to make a large loan to the Bolshevik government of Russia. This proposal was opposed by both Conservatives and Liberals and was the real cause of the fall of the first Labour Government, though the actual division which led to its resignation was on a minor issue. Mr. MacDonald claimed a dissolution; and the third general election in two years took place.

The Election of 1924.—The country was tired of these constant changes. Moreover, during the course of the election, a sensation was caused by the publication of a letter of instructions from the Bolshevik leader Zinovieff to his supporters in England. The result was that the Conservatives, though they obtained a minority of votes, won an overwhelming majority of seats (413). The Labour Party did not lose heavily, returning 151 members; but the Liberal Party, blamed on the one side for having put Labour into office, and on the other for having turned it out, was almost wiped out, returning only 40 members to Parliament.

5. The Baldwin Government and the "General Strike"

Trade Depression.—The new Government, secure in the control of both Houses of Parliament, had a clear field for the development of its policy, and was assured of a full period of office. In the first session of Parliament it passed an important measure granting pensions to widows and orphans, and contributory old-age pensions at the age of sixty-five. But the main question by which it was faced was the problem of trade and employment. The unemployment figures still remained high, in spite of the fact that foreign currencies were now largely stabilised. No other country was suffering in the same way. It was becoming plain that something was seriously wrong with British trade. Exports, which are necessary to Britain's existence, had never risen, in any year since the War, to more than four-fifths of what they were before the War. The loss was mainly in the great staple trades—cotton, which had lost one-third of its export trade, woollen, iron and steel, shipbuilding, and, above all, coal, which had been the main foundation of British prosperity during the nineteenth century.

The Problem of Coal.—In the coal trade the situation was becoming increasingly serious : many mines were being closed down, the unemployment figures had reached appalling dimensions, and the rates of wages—fixed since 1921 on the basis of total earnings district by district—were in many cases too low to support life. The miners demanded redress. The Trades Union Congress took up their cause, and there was a threat of a general strike. A crisis was reached in the summer of 1925, when, to avoid a deadlock, Mr. Baldwin promised a subsidy on coal to give time for an inquiry. The subsidy cost £23,000,000 in nine months. During that period a Royal Commission, under Sir Herbert Samuel, investigated the situation in the coal trade, analysed the causes of its decline, and suggested a series of remedies, to be carried out partly by legislation and partly by agreement in the industry. Neither the miners nor the mine-owners would accept the scheme, and the Government refused to do anything unless they agreed. Eventually it passed an Act by which the working day was extended from seven to a possible eight hours ; but this was interpreted by the miners as a proof that the Government had taken sides against them.

The General Strike.—Once again the Executive of the Trades Union Congress took up the issue on behalf of the miners.

After fevered discussions, it threatened to call a General Strike unless a solution satisfactory to the miners were found ; though it had no clear ideas as to what the solution should be, other than a renewal of the subsidy. The Government refused to yield to this threat ; and on Monday, May 3rd, the long-threatened General Strike began. Strictly speaking, it was not a General Strike at all, for many trades were not called out. But the railways, tramways, and omnibuses, the electricians, the dock workers, and all the newspaper printers, in addition to the miners, stopped work with few exceptions. The Government had, however, long since made preparations for carrying on necessary services in the event of such a stoppage ; tens of thousands of volunteers offered themselves for all sorts of work ; and although, for a few days, the normal life of the nation was very gravely impeded, the strike was a failure. After nine days the strike-leaders surrendered, and the strike was "called off," having sorely depleted the resources of all the trade unions which took part in it, and seriously impeded the recovery of trade.

Continued Trade Distress.—The coal stoppage, however, continued for seven months. This brought to a stop many iron-works and other great productive concerns. Large quantities of coal had to be imported from abroad, at very high prices. In the end, the miners were completely defeated ; their union funds were exhausted ; the wage-levels which they had to accept remained terribly low ; and some 200,000 of them (out of a total of 1,200,000) found that no work was obtainable. During the next two years the condition of the mining industry grew rapidly worse. In spite of low pay and increased hours, the majority of mines were run at a loss. The distress in the mining areas became intense, and the necessity of maintaining the families of so many unemployed workers raised the poor rates to unprecedented levels. Evidently the coal industry was in a very serious plight, and could no longer maintain the population which had hitherto subsisted upon it. Nor did the coal industry stand alone. All the major industries which had formed the strength of Britain during the nineteenth century were in a serious state of depression ; and the figures for unemployment, after an improvement in 1927, became worse again in 1928. This distress was, however, mainly concentrated in the north and west, the home of the Industrial Revolution. In the south and east new trades—mainly luxury trades, depending chiefly on the home market—were enjoying a considerable degree of prosperity. The movement of the

nineteenth century was being reversed, and wealth, industrial activity, and prosperity seemed to be drifting from the north to the south.

Rating Reform.—In the hope of giving relief to industry, the Government put forward a large scheme for transferring the major part of the burden of rates on productive industries to the Exchequer, at a cost to the taxpayer of over £30,000,000 per annum; and, in connection with this, they proposed far-reaching changes in the organisation and finance of local government. These proposals, which caused much controversy, were before the nation when the time came (1929) for a new general election. It was the first election decided by complete democracy; for in 1928 a fifth Reform Act was passed whereby the franchise was conferred upon women on the same terms as men. Thus the decision of momentous issues rested with the whole population of the nation over the age of twenty-one.

Problems of the New Era.—This narrative has to break off at a critical point. But it is very plain, from what has been narrated in this and the preceding chapters, that in the decade following the Great War the British peoples were called upon to decide questions of immense difficulty and importance; and that they had not yet found satisfactory answers for them. There was first of all the great issue of peace and war: the question whether any assured system of peace could be established which would give a security such as armaments seemed no longer able to provide. There was, secondly, the question of the future organisation of the British Empire: the question whether effective methods of common action in foreign policy and defence could be devised; the question whether workable systems of self-government could be wrought out suitable to the needs of vast oriental populations in India, Burma, Ceylon, and Egypt. There was, thirdly, the question of the future of British industry: the question whether the great staple industries could recover their old vigour; the question whether self-respecting means of livelihood could be found for a million and more idle workers. There was, fourthly, the question whether the great hopes of a finer social life which had been aroused after the War could be fulfilled—whether slums could be swept away, destitution abolished, and new opportunities opened to men and women of all classes—in the difficult circumstances of the new era. And behind all these, there was the question whether complete democracy, now for the first time fully established, would work well, would find solutions for these difficult

problems, and would perform the functions by which alone democracy can be justified—that of picking out the noblest men for the duties of leadership, and that of diffusing throughout the whole community a sense of common responsibility.

These momentous questions cannot be answered in a day or in a year. They will still be undecided when the boys and girls of to-day take up the duties of active citizenship. And upon the right decision of them depends the whole future of that ancient and revered nation, or family of nations, whose history we have been studying.

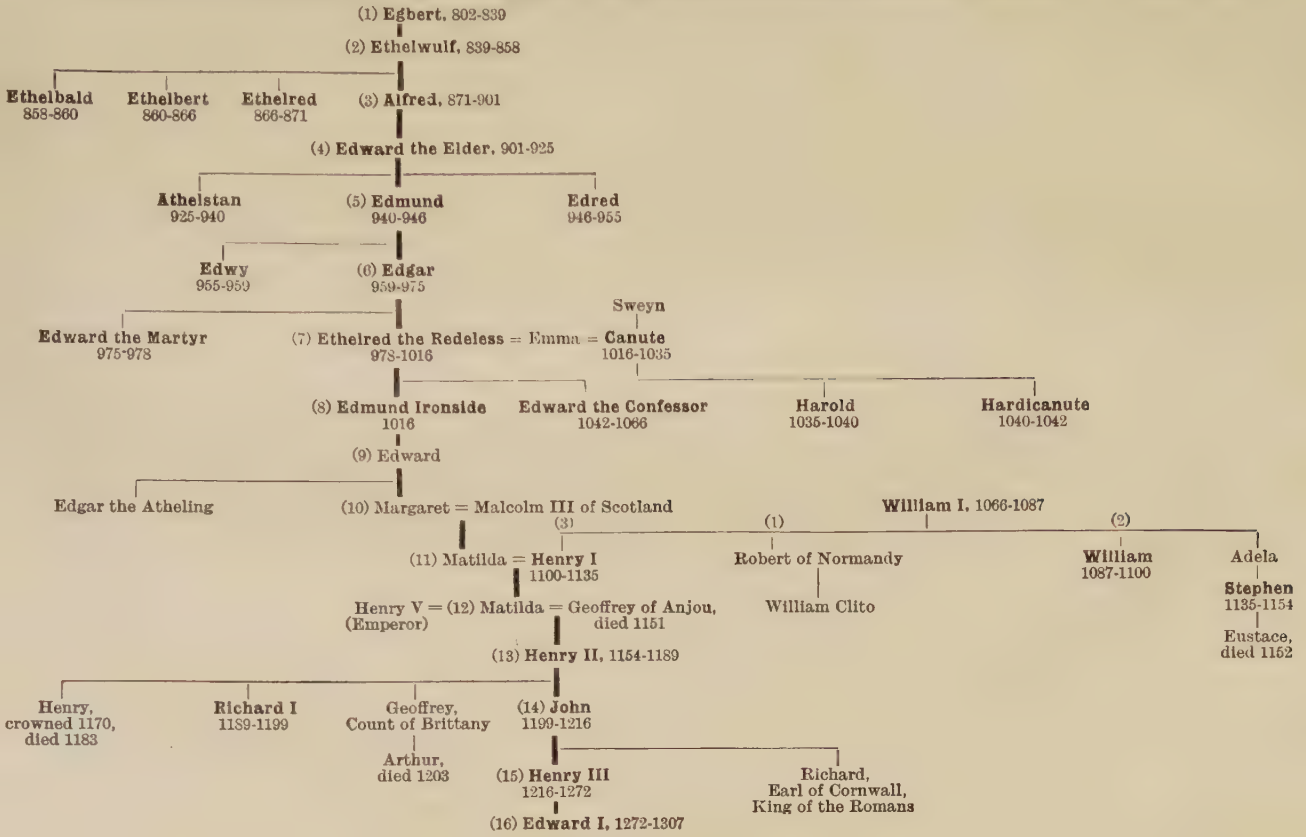
Supplementary Reading on Book X

There is already an immense literature on the Great War. For pre-war diplomacy, Lord Grey's *Twenty-five Years* is of first-rate importance. Of the short histories of the war, that by A. F. Pollard is probably the best: there is a slighter sketch by C. R. L. Fletcher, and a more detailed narrative (4 vols.) by John Buchan. Mr. Winston Churchill's *The World Crisis* is eloquent and inspiring. There are many short books on the League of Nations and its work. Mr. C. Delisle Burns has attempted to write the history of the ten years 1918–1928.

A. TABLE OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND FROM EGBERT TO EDWARD I.

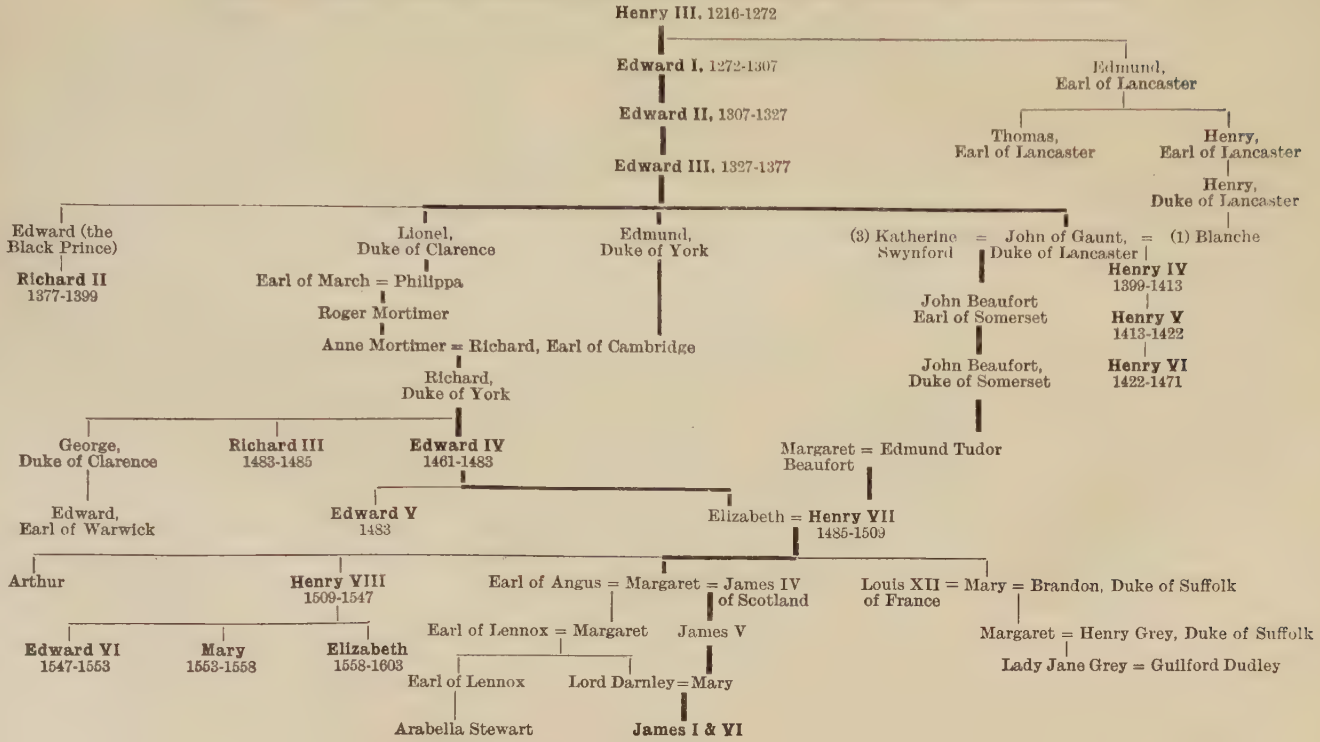
The names of reigning kings are given in **black type.**

The strong black line shows the line of continuous descent. The numbers indicate generations—sixteen generations in five hundred years.



B. TABLE OF THE KINGS OF ENGLAND FROM HENRY III TO JAMES I AND OF THE HOUSES OF LANCASTER AND YORK.

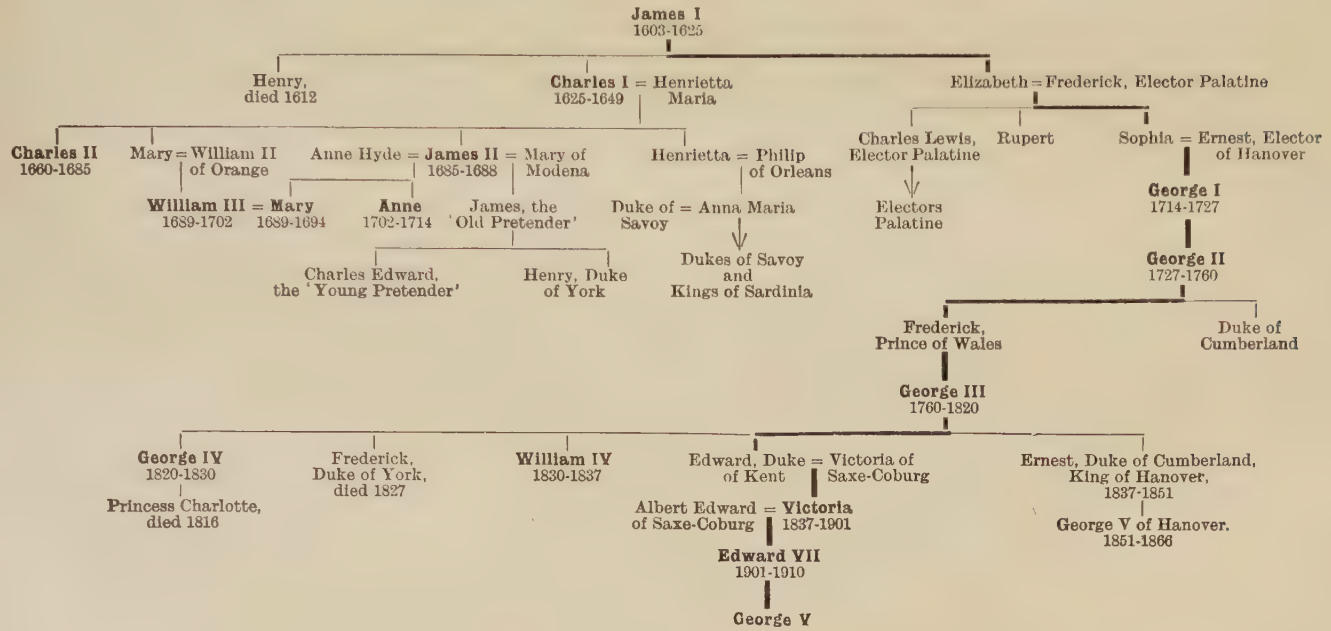
The names of reigning monarchs are printed in **black type.** The strong black line shows the line of succession.


Henry III, 1216-1272
Edward I, 1272-1307
Edward II, 1307-1327
Edward III, 1327-1377
Edmund, Earl of Lancaster
Thomas, Earl of Lancaster
Henry, Earl of Lancaster
Henry, Duke of Lancaster
Edward (the Black Prince)
Richard II 1377-1399
Lionel, Duke of Clarence
Earl of March = Philippa
Roger Mortimer
Anne Mortimer = Richard, Earl of Cambridge
Richard, Duke of York
Edmund, Duke of York
(3) Katherine Swynford = John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster = (1) Blanche
Henry IV 1399-1413
Henry V 1413-1422
Henry VI 1422-1471
John Beaufort Earl of Somerset
John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset
Margaret Beaufort = Edmund Tudor
George, Duke of Clarence
Edward, Earl of Warwick
Richard III 1483-1485
Edward IV 1461-1483
Edward V 1483
Elizabeth = Henry VII 1485-1509
Arthur
Henry VIII 1509-1547
Edward VI 1547-1553
Mary 1553-1558
Elizabeth 1558-1603
Earl of Angus = Margaret = James IV of Scotland
Earl of Lennox = Margaret
James V
Earl of Lennox
Lord Darnley = Mary
Arabella Stewart
James I & VI
Louis XII of France = Mary = Brandon, Duke of Suffolk
Margaret = Henry Grey, Duke of Suffolk
Lady Jane Grey = Guilford Dudley

C. TABLE OF THE KINGS OF GREAT BRITAIN FROM JAMES I TO GEORGE V

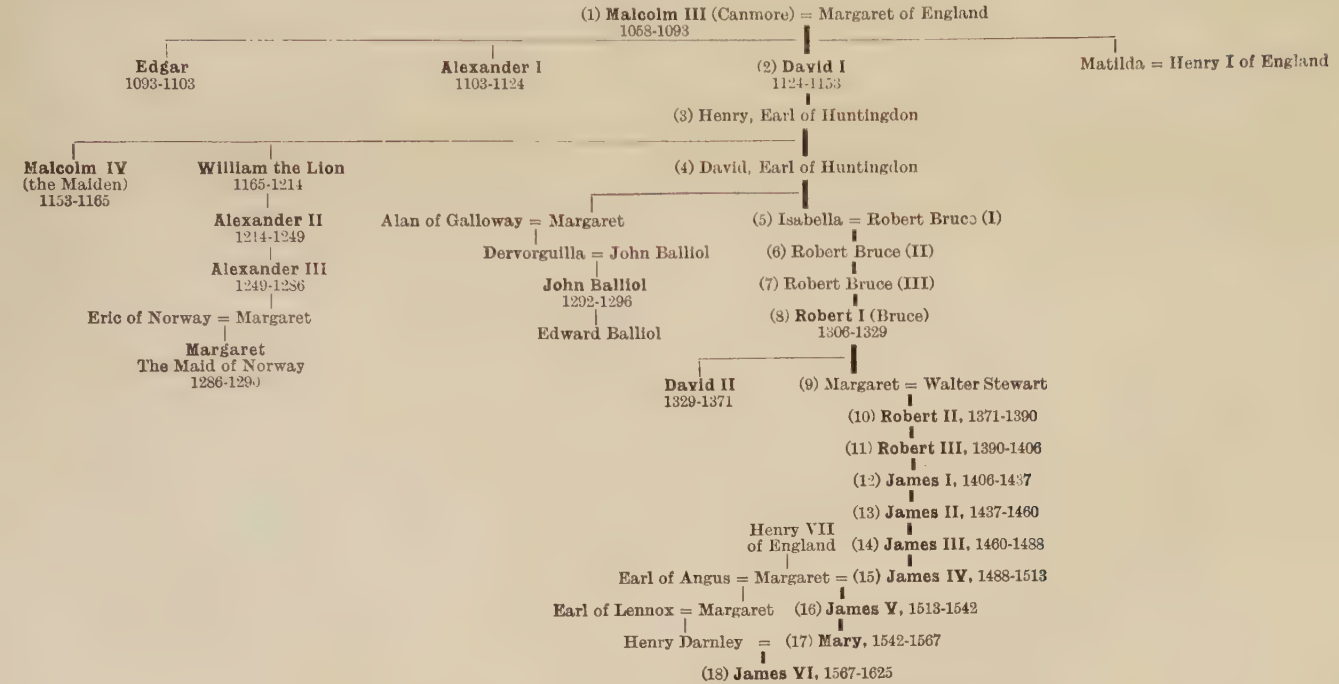
Names of reigning kings and queens of Great Britain are printed in **black type.**

The strong black line shows the line of succession from James I to George V—ten generations in 300 years.



D. TABLE OF THE KINGS OF SCOTLAND FROM MALCOLM CANMORE TO JAMES VI (and I)

Reigning sovereigns are printed in **black type**. The strong black line shows the line of succession from Malcolm Canmore to James VI (and I). The arabic figures show the generations—eighteen generations in 500 years.

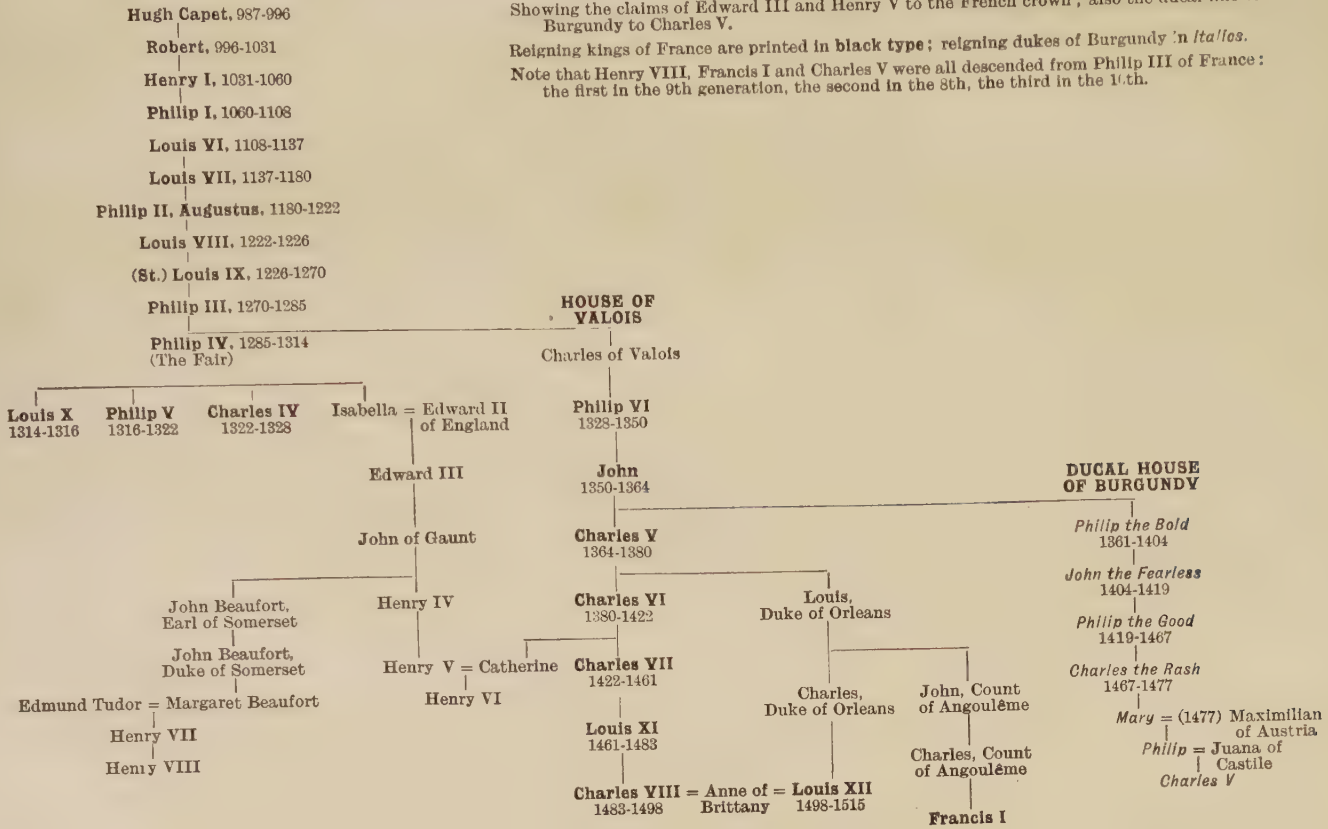


E. TABLE OF THE KINGS OF FRANCE FROM HUGH CAPET TO FRANCIS I

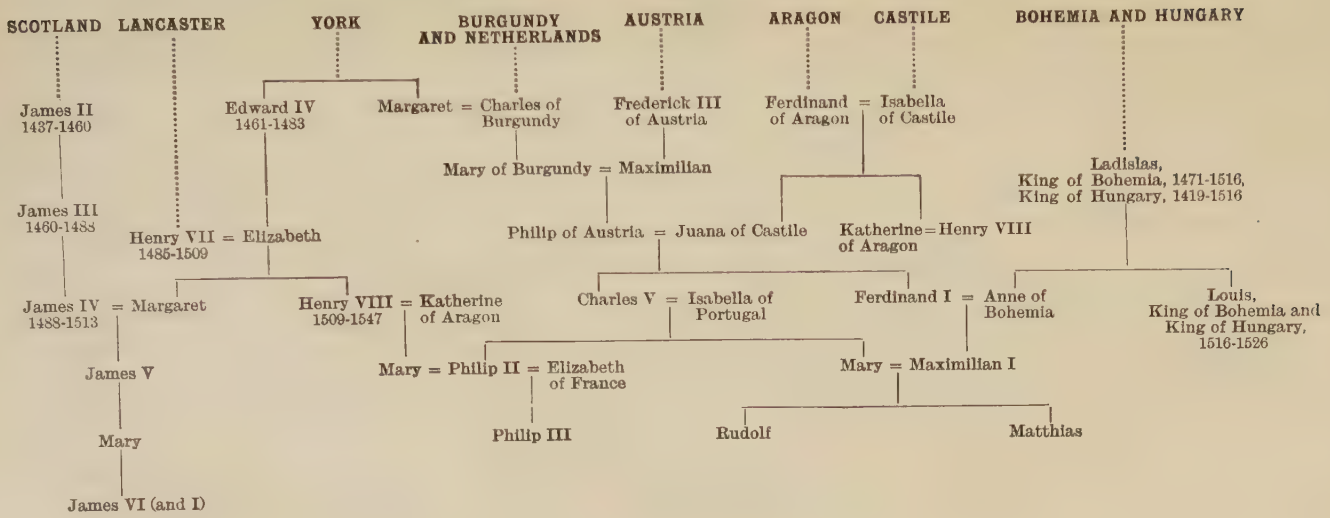
Showing the claims of Edward III and Henry V to the French crown; also the ducal line of Burgundy to Charles V.

Reigning kings of France are printed in **black type**; reigning dukes of Burgundy in *Italics*.

Note that Henry VIII, Francis I and Charles V were all descended from Philip III of France: the first in the 9th generation, the second in the 8th, the third in the 10th.

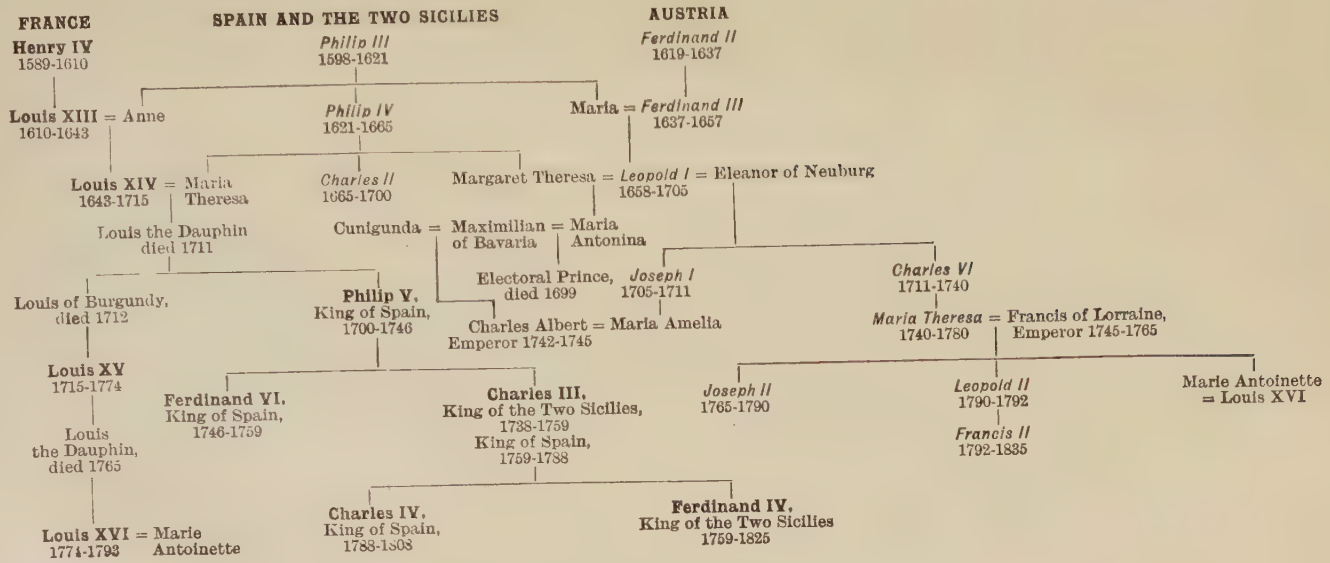


F. DYNASTIC INTERMARRIAGES OF THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES SHOWING THE GROWTH OF THE POWER OF THE HOUSE OF HABSBURG



G. THE HOUSES OF BOURBON AND HABSBURG AND THE SUCCESSION TO THE SPANISH AND AUSTRIAN THRONES

Kings of the House of Bourbon are printed in black type.
Kings of the House of Habsburg in *italics*.



CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

DATE — *B.C.*

? 1800 Stonehenge erected
? 600 The Britons come to England
55–54 Julius Cæsar in Britain

FIRST CENTURY

43 Roman Conquest of Britain begins
61 Rebellion of Boadicea
78–85 Agricola in Britain

SECOND CENTURY

122 Hadrian's Wall

THIRD CENTURY

286 Carausius Emperor in Britain

FOURTH CENTURY

395 Barbarian Irruptions into Roman Empire begin

FIFTH CENTURY

410 Roman Garrison withdrawn from Britain
410–516 Period of Anglo-Saxon Devastations
432–461 St. Patrick in Ireland

SIXTH CENTURY

516 Battle of Mount Badon
563 St. Columba at Iona
577 Battle of Deorham
597 St. Augustine at Canterbury

SEVENTH CENTURY

613 Battle of Chester
613–685 Northumbrian Supremacy
633 Battle of Heathfield
634 St. Aidan at Lindisfarne; **Oswald,** king of Northumbria
642 Battle of Maserfield
„ **Oswy,** King of Northumbria
655 Battle of Winwood
664 Synod of Whitby
685–825 Mercian Supremacy

DATE — *EIGHTH CENTURY*

732 Bede's Ecclesiastical History
758–796 **Offa,** King of Mercia
793 First known raid of the Northmen

NINTH CENTURY

825 Battle of Ellandun: **Egbert,** King of All England
843 **Kenneth McAlpine,** King of Scotland
853 Norse overlord of Ireland
860 Danes sack Winchester
867 Danes settle Yorkshire
870 Danes conquer East Anglia
871 The Year of Battles in Wessex: Battle of Ashdown
871–900 **Alfred the Great**
878 Athelney: Treaty of Chippenham
886 Alfred and Guthrum's Peace

TENTH CENTURY

900–924 **Edward the Elder**
913 Northmen in Normandy
913–918 Conquest of Danish Mercia
924–939 **Athelstan**
937 Battle of Brunanburh
958–975 **Edgar the Peaceful**
960 Dunstan, Abp. of Canterbury
978–1016 **Ethelred the Redeless**
991 Battle of Maldon
992 First levy of Danegeld

ELEVENTH CENTURY

1002 Massacre of St. Bride's Day
1013 Sweyn Master of England
1014 Battle of Clontarf
1016–1035 **Canute**
1018 Battle of Carham
1042–1066 **Edward the Confessor**
1055–1065 Westminster Abbey buil
1052–1066 Ascendancy of the House of Godwin
1066 **Harold**
1066 (Sept.) Battle of Stamford Bridge
1066 (Oct.) Battle of Hastings
1066–1087 **William I**

DATE

1068–1072 Completion of the Conquest
1075 Revolt of the Barons
1086 Domesday Book
1087–1100 William II
1087 Revolt of the Barons
1092 Conquest of Cumbria
1095–9 The First Crusade
1097 Banishment of Anselm

TWELFTH CENTURY

1100–1135 Henry I
1102 Revolt of Bellême
1106 Battle of Tinchebrai
1107 Settlement of Investiture Contest
1124–1153 David I of Scotland
1135–1154 Stephen
1138 Battle of the Standard
1153 Treaty of Wallingford
1154–1189 Henry II
1164 Constitutions of Clarendon
1166 Assize of Clarendon
1170 Strongbow in Ireland
„ Murder of Becket
1174 William the Lion does homage for Scotland
1189–1199 Richard I
1190–1194 Richard on the Third Crusade
1194–1240 Llywelyn the Great in Wales
1199–1216 John

THIRTEENTH CENTURY

1204 Loss of Normandy
1205–1213 Quarrel with the Pope
1207 Stephen Langton, Abp. of Canterbury
1214 Battle of Bouvines
1215 Magna Carta
1216–1272 Henry III
1216–1232 Minority of Henry III
1217 Battles of Lincoln and Sandwich
1221–1224 The Mendicant Friars come to England
1234–1258 Personal Government of Henry III
1246–1273 Llywelyn ap Gruffydd Prince of Wales
1254 The Sicilian Crown accepted
„ Simon de Montfort returns from Gascony
1258 Provisions of Oxford
1259 Treaty with France
1263 Battle of Largs
1264 Mise of Amiens
„ Battle of Lewes
1265 Simon de Montfort's Parliament
„ Battle of Evesham
1272–1307 Edward I
1275 First Parliament of Edward I
1276–7 First Invasion of Wales
1279 Statute of Mortmain
1282–4 Conquest of Wales
1283 Statute of Merchants

DATE

1285 *De donis conditionalibus* (St. of Westminster II)
1290 *Quia Emptores* (St. of Westminster III)
1292 John Balliol, King of Scotland
1294–1303 War with France
1295 The Model Parliament
1296 Conquest of Scotland
1297 Confirmation of the Charters
„ Battle of Stirling
1298 Battle of Falkirk

FOURTEENTH CENTURY

1303–5 Second Conquest of Scotland
1306 Bruce's Rebellion
1306–29 Robert Bruce, King of Scotland
1307–1327 Edward II
1310 The Lords Ordainers
1314 Battle of Bannockburn
1315–1318 Edward Bruce in Ireland
1322 Battle of Boroughbridge
„ Parliament of York
1327 Deposition of Edward II
1327–1377 Edward III
1327–1330 Rule of Mortimer and Isabella
1328 Treaty of Northampton
1332–41 Edward Balliol in Scotland
1333 Battle of Halidon Hill
1338 Beginning of "Hundred Years' War"
1340 Battle of Sluys
1340 Parliamentary Control over Taxation
1346 Battles of Cressy and Neville's Cross
1347 Capture of Calais
1348 First Visitation of the Black Death
1349 Ordinance of Labourers
1351 First Statute of Provisors
1353 First Statute of Praemunire
1356 Battle of Poitiers
1360 Treaty of Bretigny
„ Institution of Justices of the Peace
1362 English used in Parliament and Law courts
1366 Statute of Kilkenny
1370–1389 Disasters of the French War
c. **1370–1400** Geoffrey Chaucer's literary work
1376 The Good Parliament : Impeachment
1377–1399 Richard II
1381 The Peasants' Revolt
1382 Wycliffe's Bible
1388 The "Merciless Parliament"
1389–1397 Constitutional government of Richard II
1393 Great Statute of Praemunire
1394 Richard II in Ireland
1396 Peace with France
1398 Parliament of Shrewsbury
1399 Deposition of Richard II
1399–1413 Henry IV

FIFTEENTH CENTURY

1400–1406 Rising of Owen Glendower
1401 Statute *de heretico comburendo*

DATE

1403 Battle of Shrewsbury
1413–1422 Henry V
1414 Lollard Conspiracy
1415 Battle of Agincourt
1420 Treaty of Troyes
1422–1461 Henry VI
1422–1435 Duke of Bedford in France
1429 Joan of Arc at Orleans
1430–1 Capture and Death of Joan of Arc
1430 Limitation of franchise
1435 Treaty of Arras
1450 Battle of Formigny: loss of Normandy
„ Jack Cade's rebellion
1453 Battle of Castillon: loss of Gascony
1454 Duke of York Protector
1455 Battle of St. Albans I
1460 Battles of Northampton and Wakefield
1461 Battles of St. Albans II, Mortimer's Cross and Towton
1461–1483 Edward IV
1464 Battles of Hedgley Moor and Hexham
1469 Edward's quarrel with Warwick
1471 Battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury
1475 Treaty of Pecquigny
1476 Caxton's printing press
1483 Edward V
1483–1485 Richard III
1485 Battle of Bosworth
1485–1509 Henry VII
1487 Battle of Stoke
„ Act against Livery and Maintenance: Star Chamber
1492–1497 Perkin Warbeck
1494 Poynings' Acts
1497–1498 Cabot in America
1499 Colet and Erasmus at Oxford

SIXTEENTH CENTURY

1502 James IV of Scotland marries Margaret Tudor
1509–1547 Henry VIII
1513 Battles of Flodden and Guinegate
1515–1529 Wolsey chief Minister
1516 *Utopia* published
1521 Henry VIII's book against Luther
1521–1525 Renewed war with France
1525 Reversal of alliances: balance of power
1527 Henry VIII seeks a divorce
1529 Fall of Wolsey
1529–1536 Long Parliament of the Reformation
1530 Subjugation of the Clergy
1533 Appeals Act: Cranmer gives a divorce
„ Birth of Elizabeth
1534 Act of Supremacy
1534–1540 Power of Thomas Cromwell
1535 Execution of More and Fisher

DATE

1536 Execution of Anne Boleyn
„ Suppression of the lesser Monasteries
„ Pilgrimage of the North
„ Union of England and Wales
1539 The Six Articles: Act of Proclamations
1542 War with Scotland: Battle of Solway Moss
1543–1546 War with France: capture of Boulogne
1547–1553 Edward VI
1547–1551 Somerset Protector
1547 Battle of Pinkie
1549 First Book of Common Prayer
„ Religious and Economic risings: Ket in Norfolk
1551–3 Ascendancy of Northumberland
1552 Second Book of Common Prayer
1553–1558 Mary I
1554–1560 Mary of Guise Regent in Scotland
1554 Rebellion of Wyatt
„ Marriage of Mary and Philip
„ Restoration of Papal Authority
1555–1558 The Marian persecution
1558 Loss of Calais
1558–1603 Elizabeth
1559 Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity
1559 The Court of High Commission
1560 Siege of Leith and treaty of Edinburgh
1560–1567 Rebellion of Shane O'Neill
1561 Mary Queen of Scots returns to Scotland
„ David Wolfe in Munster
1562 Hawkins' Guinea voyage
1563 The Thirty-nine Articles
„ Statute of Artificers
1565 Mary marries Darnley
1566 Parker's Advertisements
„ Murder of Riccio
1567 Murder of Darnley
„ Battle of Carberry Hill
1568 Battle of Langside: Mary in England
„ Hawkins and Drake at San Juan de Ullua
1569 Revolt of the Northern Earls
1569–1573 Revolt in Munster
1570 The Pope excommunicates Elizabeth
1571 The Ridolfi Plot
1572–3 Drake on the Spanish Main
1575 First executions of Catholic missionaries
1577–1580 Voyage of the *Golden Hind*
1579 Irish rebellion
1584–1586 English plantation in Munster
1585 Leicester in the Netherlands
1585–6 Drake in the West Indies
1586 Babington Plot
1587 Execution of Mary Queen of Scots
„ Drake attacks Cadiz
1588 The Spanish Armada
1588–9 "Martin Marprelate" Tracts

DATE

1595 Rebellion of O'Neill
1599 Essex in Ireland
1600 The East India Company established

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

1601 Monopolies abolished
„ "Poor Law" Act
„ Rebellion and death of Essex
1603 Final subjugation of Ireland
1603–1625 James I
1604 Hampton Court Conference
„ Peace with Spain
1605 Gunpowder Plot
1607 First settlement in Virginia
1608 Plantation of Ulster
1608 The "Book of Rates"
1611 The "Authorised Version"
1614 The "Addled Parliament"
1616 British factory at Surat
1617 Raleigh in Guiana
1619 Representative Government in Virginia
1620 Voyage of the "Mayflower"
1621 Impeachment of Bacon
1623 Massacre of Amboina
1624–1630 War with Spain
1624 Settlement of Barbados
1625–1649 Charles I
1626 Impeachment of Buckingham
1627–1629 War with France
1627 The Forced Loan and the Five Knights
1628 The Petition of Right
1629–1640 Personal Government of Charles I
1629 Massachusetts colonised
1632–1640 Wentworth in Ireland
1632 Maryland colonised
1633 Laud Abp. of Canterbury
„ Connecticut colonised
1634 High Commission Court in Scotland
„ First levy of ship-money
1635 Book of Canons in Scotland
1637 Hampden's Case
„ Scottish revolt
1638 Scottish National Covenant and General Assembly of Glasgow
1639 First Bishops' War
1640 The Short Parliament
„ Second Bishops' War
1640–1660 The Long Parliament
1641 Triennial Act
„ Abolition of Prerogative Courts
„ Attainder of Strafford
„ The Irish Rebellion
„ The Grand Remonstrance
1642–1652 The Civil War
1642 Battle of Edge Hill
1643 Battles of Roundway Down, Newbury I, and Adwalton
„ Solemn League and Covenant
„ The "Cessation" in Ireland

DATE

1644 Battles of Marston Moor, Lostwithiel and Newbury II
„ The Self-denying Ordnance
1645 Battles of Naseby, Langport and Philiphaugh
1646 Battle of Benburb
1646–1648 Negotiations: King, Parliament, Army
1647 "Heads of Proposals"
1648 Second Civil War: Battle of Preston
„ Pryde's Purge (Dec.)
1649 Execution of Charles I (Jan.)
1649–1653 The Commonwealth
1649 Cromwell in Ireland: Drogheda and Wexford
1650 Blake destroys Rupert's fleet at Cartagena
„ Battle of Dunbar
1651 Battle of Worcester
„ Navigation Act
1652–1654 First Dutch War: Blake's naval battles
1653 Dissolution of the Rump
„ "Barebones' Parliament"
„ The Instrument of Government (Dec.)
1653–1658 Oliver Cromwell, Protector
1654 The Major-Generals
„ Blake and the Barbary Corsairs
„ Seizure of Acadia
1655 Conquest of Jamaica
1655–1659 War with Spain
1657 "Humble Petition and Advice"
1658 Battle of the Dunes
1659 The Rump restored: Protectorate abolished
1660 Long Parliament restored and dissolved: the Convention
„ The Restoration (May)
1660–1685 Charles II
1660–1667 *Clarendon Chief Minister*
1660 Act of Indemnity and Oblivion
„ Navigation Act
1661 Scottish Rescissory Act
1661–1679 Long Parliament of the Restoration
1661 Militia Act: Corporation Act
1662 Act of Uniformity: Licensing Act
„ Act of Settlement in Ireland
1663 Carolina colonised
1664 Conventicle Act: Triennial Act
1665–1667 Second Dutch War
1665 The Great Plague: Five Mile Act
1666 Battle of the Downs
„ Great Fire of London
1667 The Dutch in the Medway: Peace of Breda
„ Impeachment of Clarendon
1667–1673 *The "Cabal"*
1668 The Triple Alliance
„ Bombay given to the East India Company
1670 Secret Treaty of Dover
1672 Declaration of Indulgence

DATE

1672 Stop of the Exchequer
1672–1674 Third Dutch War: Battle of Southwold
1673 The Test Act
1673–1679 *Danby Chief Minister*
1675 Second Secret Treaty with Louis XIV
1677 Marriage of William of Orange to Mary
1678 The Popish Plot
„ Impeachment of Danby
1679 *Habeas Corpus* Act
„ Battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge
1679–1688 The "Killing Time" in Scotland
1679–1681 The Exclusion Bill
1681 Pennsylvania colonised
1681–1684 Forfeiture of Borough Charters
1683 The Rye-House Plot
1685–1688 James II
1685 Battle of Sedgemoor: "Bloody Assize"
1686 Court of High Commission revived
1687 Tyrconnel in Ireland
„ Declaration of Indulgence
1688 Trial of the Seven Bishops
„ William of Orange lands at Torbay (Nov.)
„ Flight of James II (Dec.)
1689 The Convention and the Declaration of Rights
1689–1694 William III and Mary II
1689 Scottish Claim of Right
„ Bill of Rights
„ Mutiny Act, Civil List, Toleration Act
„ Battle of Killiecrankie
„ Relief of Londonderry: Battle of Newtown Butler
1690 Battles of the Boyne and Beachy Head
1691 Battle of Aughrim; Treaty of Limerick
1692 Battles of La Hogue and Steenkerke
„ Massacre of Glencoe
1694 Bank of England founded
„ Triennial Act
1694–1702 William III
1695 Bank of Scotland founded
„ Irish Penal Code begun
1696 *The Whig "Junto"*—first party Ministry
„ Board of Trade and Plantations
1697 Treaty of Ryswick
1698–1700 Scottish expedition to Darien
1698 First Partition Treaty
1699 Second Partition Treaty

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

1701 Act of Settlement
„ Impeachment of Somers
„ The Grand Alliance formed
1702–1714 Anne

DATE

1702–1710 *Ministry of Godolphin and Marlborough*
1702–1713 War of the Spanish Succession
1703 Methuen Treaty with Portugal
„ Scottish Act of Security
1704 Capture of Gibraltar
„ Battles of Blenheim and Malaga
1705 Galway and Peterborough in Spain
1706 Battles of Ramillies and Turin
1707 Battle of Almanza
„ Union of England and Scotland
1708 Battle of Oudenarde
„ Capture of Minorca
1709 Battle of Malplaquet
1710 Trial of Sacheverell
„ Capture of Acadia
1710–1714 *Ministry of Harley and St. John*
1711 Occasional Conformity Act
1713 Treaty of Utrecht: Asiento Treaty
1714 Schism Act
1714–1727 George I
1714–1720 *Ministry of Stanhope*
1715 Jacobite risings: Battles of Preston and Sheriffmuir
1716 Septennial Act
1717 The Triple Alliance
1718 Battle of Cape Passaro
1719 Declaratory Act (Ireland)
„ Peerage Bill
1720 The South Sea Bubble
1720–1742 *Ministry of Walpole*
1725–1735 Bolingbroke in Opposition
1727 Siege of Gibraltar
1727—1760 George II
1732 Colonisation of Georgia
1733 Excise Bill and Molasses Act
„ First "Family Compact"
1735 Religious revival in Wales
1739 Beginning of Wesley's Apostolate
1739 War with Spain
1740–1748 War of the Austrian Succession
1740 Anson's Voyage round the World
1742–1744 *Ministry of Carteret*
1743 Battle of Dettingen
1744 Battle of Toulon
1744–1754 *Ministry of Pelham*
1745 Battle of Fontenoy
„ Capture of Louisbourg
„ Jacobite rising in Scotland: Battle of Prestonpans
1746 Battle of Culloden
„ The French capture Madras
1748 Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle
1751 The siege of Arcot
1754–1756 *Ministry of Newcastle*
1754 Congress of Albany
1755 Braddock's defeat
„ Deportation of Acadians
1756 The "Diplomatic Revolution"
„ Loss of Minorca
„ The Black Hole of Calcutta
1756–1757 *Devonshire-Pitt Ministry*

DATE

1757–1761 *Newcastle-Pitt Ministry*
- **1757** Battle of Plassey
- „ Convention of Klosterzeven
- **1758** Battle of Crefeld
- „ Capture of Louisbourg
- „ Capture of Fort Duquesne
- „ Battle of Ticonderoga
- **1759** French threat of invasion
- „ Capture of Ticonderoga and Guadeloupe
- „ Battle of Minden
- „ Battles of Lagos (Aug.) and Quiberon Bay (Nov.)
- „ Capture of Quebec
- **1760** Battle of Wandewash

1760–1820 George III
- **1760** Coal-smelting introduced
- **1761** Capture of Pondicherry
- „ Third Family Compact
- „ (Oct.) Resignation of Pitt

1762–1763 *Ministry of Bute*
- **1762** War with Spain ; capture of Havana and the Philippines
- **1763** Treaty of Paris

1763–1765 *Grenville Ministry*
- **1763** Canada Proclamation
- „ Prosecution of Wilkes
- „ Revolt of Mir Kasim
- „ Conspiracy of Pontiac
- **1764** Battle of Buxar
- „ Hargreave's spinning-jenny
- „ Watt's Steam-engine
- **1765** The Stamp Act
- „ Clive's Dual system in Bengal

1765–1766 *Rockingham Ministry*
- **1766** Repeal of the Stamp Act

1766–1768 *Chatham (non-party) Ministry*
- **1767** Townshend's duties on tea, etc.
- „ War with Hyder Ali (Mysore)
- **1768** The Middlesex election
- „ The Corsica question
- „ The Octennial Act (Ireland)
- „ Captain Cook's first voyage

1768–1770 *Grafton Ministry*
- **1769** Arkwright's water-frame

1770–1782 *North Ministry*
- **1770** Repeal of American duties (except tea)
- „ The "Boston Massacre"

1772–1785 *Warren Hastings Governor of Bengal*
- **1772** The Somersett Case
- „ Captain Cook's second voyage
- **1773** North's Regulating Act (India)
- „ Treaty of Benares (Oudh)
- „ Boston Tea Riots
- **1774** North's Penal Acts (America)
- „ The Quebec Act
- „ The Rohilla War

1774–1776 Conflict between Hastings and Francis
- **1775** Battles of Lexington and Bunker's Hill

DATE
- **1776** American Declaration of Independence
- „ Battle of Long Island
- „ Grattan leader of Irish reformers
- „ Publication of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*
- „ Captain Cook's third voyage
- **1777** Battles of Brandywine and Germantown
- „ Capitulation of Saratoga
- **1778** France declares war
- **1779** Spain declares war

1779–1782 Siege of Gibraltar
- **1779** Coalition of Indian powers against the E.I.C.
- „ Irish volunteer movement
- „ Agitation for parliamentary reform
- **1780** The Armed Neutrality
- „ War with Holland
- „ Battles of Camden and King's Mountain
- „ Battle of Dominica
- „ Goddard's march across India
- „ The Gordon Riots
- „ Ireland demands legislative independence
- „ The first Sunday school
- **1781** Battle of Dogger Bank
- „ Capitulation of Yorktown
- „ Battle of Porto Novo
- **1782** Congress of Dungannon
- „ (March-July) *Rockingham Ministry*

1782–1783 *Shelburne Ministry*
- **1782** Independence of United States recognised
- „ Legislative independence granted to Ireland
- „ Burke's Economical Reform
- „ Migration of U.E. Loyalists to Canada
- **1783** *Fox-North coalition*
- „ Fox's India Bill

1783–1801 *Ministry of Pitt*
- „ Pitt's India Act
- „ New Brunswick organised as a colony
- **1785** Cartwright's power-loom
- **1786** Commercial treaty with France
- **1787** Society for the Abolition of the Slave trade
- **1788** Convict settlement at Botany Bay

1788–1795 Impeachment of Warren Hastings

1788–1793 *Cornwallis Governor-General in India*
- **1789** Beginning of the French Revolution
- **1790** Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*
- **1791** Canada Act
- „ United Irishmen organised
- **1792** London Corresponding Society
- „ Defeat of Tipu Sahib by Cornwallis
- **1793** France declares war against Britain
- „ Scottish sedition trials
- „ W. Carey goes as missionary to India

DATE

1794 English sedition trials
„ Naval battle of June 1
„ Arbitration treaty with U.S.A.
1795 Breakdown of the First Coalition
„ Speenhamland "Act"
„ Lord Fitzwilliam in Ireland
„ Conquest of Ceylon
1796 Occupation of Cape of Good Hope and Guiana
1797 Naval mutinies
„ Battles of St. Vincent (Feb.) and Camperdown (Oct.)
„ Conquest of Trinidad
„ Disarmament of Ulster
1798–1805 *Wellesley Governor-General in India*
1798 Battle of the Nile
„ Irish rebellion: Battle of Vinegar Hill
1799 The Second Coalition formed
„ Conquest of Mysore: Seringapatam
1799–1800 Anti-Combination Acts

NINETEENTH CENTURY

1801 Battles of Aboukir and Copenhagen
„ Annexation of the Carnatic and subsidiary treaty with Oudh
„ Irish Act of Union
1801–1804 *Addington Ministry*
1801 Louisiana purchase
1802 Treaty of Amiens
„ Cobbett's *Political Register* begun
„ The first Factory Act
1803 Renewed war with France: threat of invasion
„ Maratha war: battles of Assaye, Argaon, Delhi and Laswari
1804–6 *Pitt's second ministry*
1804 War with Holkar
1805 Battles of Trafalgar and Austerlitz
1806–1807 *Ministry of all the Talents*
1806 Berlin Decree
„ Reoccupation of Cape Colony
1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade
1807–1809 *Portland Ministry*
1807 Treaty of Tilsit and attack on Copenhagen
„ Orders in Council and Milan Decree
„ Annexation of Heligoland
1808–1814 Peninsular War
1808 Battle of Vimeiro
„ Moore's advance and retreat to Corunna
1809–1812 *Perceval Ministry*
1809 Walcheren expedition
„ Battle of Talavera
„ Occupation of Ionian Islands
1810 Busaco and Torres Vedras
1811 Occupation of Java
„ Luddite riots
„ Battles of Fuentes d'Onoro and Albuera
1812–1827 *Liverpool Ministry*

DATE

1812 Orders in Council withdrawn
„ Napoleon's Russian campaign
„ War with the United States
„ Battle of Salamanca
1813–1818 *Marquess Hastings Governor-General in India*
1813 Battles of Vittoria and Leipzig
1814 Battle of Toulouse
„ Battle of Lundy's Lane
1815 Congress of Vienna
„ Battle of Waterloo
„ Treaty of Ghent (with U.S.A.)
„ New Corn Law
1816 Cobbett's *Political Register* at 2*d.*
„ Spa Fields Riot
1817–18 Last Maratha War
1818 Settlement of Indian Native States
„ Boundary of Canada and U.S. defined
1819 "Battle" of Peterloo
„ The Six Acts
„ Singapore acquired
1820–1830 **George IV**
1820 Trial of Queen Caroline
„ Cato Street conspiracy
1821 Resumption of cash payments
1822 Death of Castlereagh: Canning dominant
„ Irish Famine
1823 Catholic Association formed
„ Anti-slavery resolution in Parliament
„ Slave rising in Demerara
„ Monroe doctrine promulgated
1824 Repeal of the anti-combination laws
1824–6 First Burmese War
1825 Stockton and Darlington railway
1826 Straits Settlements organised
„ Peel reforms the Penal Code
1827 Battle of Navarino
„ Swan River Settlement
„ *Canning Prime Minister* (Apr.–Aug.)
1828–30 *Wellington Prime Minister*
1828 Repeal of Test and Corporation Acts
„ Reorganisation of the police
„ The Clare election
1829 Catholic Emancipation carried
1830–1837 **William IV**
1830–1834 *Ministry of Grey*
1830 Colonisation Society founded
1831 Reform Bill introduced
1832 Reform Act carried
1833 Abolition of Slavery
„ Factory Act
„ India Act
„ *Tracts for the Times* begin
1834 *Peel's first ministry*
1834–1841 *Melbourne Ministry*
1834 Poor Law Reform Act
„ Owen's Grand National Trades Union
1835 Victoria colonised
„ Municipal Reform Act
„ Macaulay's Minute on Education
1836 South Australia colonised

DATE

1836 The great Trek (South Africa)

1837–1902 Victoria

1837 Rebellion in Canada
„ Invention of the telegraph
1838 The People's Charter drawn up
„ The Anti-Corn Law League founded
„ The Boers in Natal: Battle of Blood River
„ Shah Shuja restored to Afghanistan
1839 Belgian Neutrality Treaty
„ Chartist petition rejected
„ Durham's Report on Canada
„ Colonisation of New Zealand
„ Occupation of Aden
1840 Canada Act

1840–1842 First Chinese War

1840 Annexation of New Zealand
„ Penny Postage
„ First Atlantic liner

1841–1846 *Sir Robert Peel, Prime Minister*

1841 Disaster in Afghanistan
1842 Ashburton Treaty
„ Peel's first Tree Trade Budget
„ Mines Act
„ Second Chartist Petition
„ Hong Kong annexed
1843 Disruption of the Church of Scotland
„ Annexation of Sind
1844 Railways Act: Bank Act
„ The Rochdale Pioneers

1845–1846 Potato famine in Ireland

1845–1846 The first Sikh War

1846 Repeal of the Corn Laws

1846–1850 *Lord John Russell, Prime Minister*

1846 Responsible government in Canada
„ Oregon treaty (U.S.A.)
„ Kaffir War in Cape Colony
„ Ten Hours Act
„ Annexation of British Kaffraria
1848 Rebellion in Ireland
„ Public Health Act
„ Last Chartist Petition

1848–1856 *Dalhousie Governor-General in India*

1848–1849 Second Sikh War

1849 Livingstone's first journey

1850–1855 Responsible government in Australia

1850 Don Pacifico debate
1851 The Great Exhibition
„ Gold-finds in Australia
„ The A.S.E. (first national Trade Union)
1852 *Lord Derby's first Ministry* (Feb.-Dec.)

1852–1855 *Lord Aberdeen Prime Minister*

1852 Second Burmese War
„ Sand River Convention (Transvaal)
1853 Livingstone's journey across Africa

1854–1856 Crimean War

1854 Battles of Alma, Balaklava, Inkerman
„ Florence Nightingale in the Crimea

1855–1858 *Lord Palmerston's first Ministry*

1856 Treaty of Paris
„ Annexation of Oudh

DATE

1857–1860 Second Chinese War

1857–1858 Indian Mutiny

1857 Indian Universities established
1858 Abolition of the E.I.C.
„ British Columbia organised as a colony
„ Livingstone explores the Zambezi
„ The Fenian Brotherhood

1858–1859 *Lord Derby's second Ministry*

1859–1865 *Lord Palmerston's second Ministry*

1860–1870 Maori wars in New Zealand

1860 Cobden's Commercial Treaty with France
1861 Lagos occupied
1862 Troops withdrawn from the colonies
1863 Miners' Federation established
„ Ionian Islands ceded to Greece

1865–1866 *Lord Russell's second Ministry*

1866 Russell-Gladstone Reform Bill

1866–1868 *Lord Derby's third Ministry*

1867 Second Reform Act
„ British North America Act
„ Fenian outrages
1868 *Disraeli's First Ministry* (Feb.-Dec.)

1868–1874 *Gladstone's First Ministry*

1869 Disestablishment of the Irish Church
„ Hudson Bay Co. bought out

1869–1870 Cardwell's Army Reforms

1870 Irish Land Act
„ Education Act
„ Ballot Act
„ Manitoba a province of Canada
1871 Alabama Arbitration
„ Trade Union Act
1872 Responsible Government in Cape Colony
1873 Ashanti War

1874–1880 *Disraeli's Second Ministry*

1874 Fiji annexed
1875 Employers and Workmen Act
1876 New Zealand Constitution
„ Imperial title for India adopted
„ Baluchistan annexed
1877 The Transvaal annexed
1878 Congress of Berlin

1878–1880 Second Afghan War

1879 Zulu War
„ Irish Land League

1880–1885 *Gladstone's second Ministry*

1880 Employers' Liability Act
„ Roberts' march to Kandahar
„ Revolt of the Transvaal
1881 The Mahdi in the Sudan
„ Irish Land Act
„ Battle of Majuba: autonomy of the Transvaal
„ Canadian Pacific Railway begun
1882 Phœnix Park murders
„ Married Women's Property Act
„ Bombardment of Alexandria and Battle of Tel-el-Kebir
„ Local self-government in India

1883–1907 *Lord Cromer in Egypt*

DATE

1883 Egyptian army destroyed by the Mahdi
„ Ilbert Bill (India)
1884 Conference of Berlin
„ Gordon sent to evacuate the Sudan
„ British protectorates over Nigeria, Somaliland and S.E. New Guinea
„ Convention of London (Transvaal)
„ Gold found in the Transvaal
„ Third Reform Act
1885 Fall of Khartoum and Death of Gordon
„ British protectorate in Bechuanaland
„ Penjdeh crisis with Russia
„ Third Burmese War
„ Indian National Congress founded
1885–6 *First Salisbury Ministry*
1886 *Third Gladstone Ministry* (Feb.–Aug.)
„ First Home Rule Bill
1886–1892 *Second Salisbury Ministry*
1886 Anglo-German treaty on the Pacific
„ British East Africa Co. organised
1887 Jubilee of Queen Victoria
„ First Colonial Conference
1888 County Councils instituted
„ Parnell Commission
„ Zululand annexed
1889 British South Africa Co. organised
„ London Dock Strike
1890–1896 *Rhodes, Prime Minister of S. Africa*
1890 Colonial treaties with France and Germany
„ Labour unrest in Australia
1891 Colonial treaty with Portugal
1892–1894 *Fourth Gladstone Ministry*
1892 Second Home Rule Bill
1893 Afghan frontier fixed (Durand line)
1893–1902 *Seddon Prime Minister of New Zealand*
1893 Matabili War
1894–5 *Rosebery Ministry*
1894 Harcourt's Death-duties Budget
„ Compulsory arbitration in New Zealand
1895–1902 *Third Salisbury Ministry*
1895 Venezuela boundary dispute
1896 Jameson Raid (Jan.)
1896–1898 Reconquest of the Sudan by Kitchener
1896–1911 *Laurier Prime Minister in Canada*
1897 Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee
„ Second Colonial Conference
„ Workmen's Compensation Act
1898 Battle of Omdurman
„ French expelled from Fashoda
1899 (June) Bloemfontein Conference
„ (Oct.) South African War begins
„ (Dec.) Battles of Magersfontein, Stormberg and Colenso.
„ Boxer rising in China
„ Venezuela arbitration
„ First Hague Conference

DATE

1899–1905 *Lord Curzon Viceroy of India*
1900 Battle of Paardeberg
„ British Labour Party founded

TWENTIETH CENTURY

1901 Federation of Australia
1902–1910 Edward VII
1902 Peace of Vereeniging
1902–1905 *Balfour Ministry*
1902 Third Colonial Conference
„ Anglo-Japanese Alliance
„ Education Act
1903 Irish Land-purchase Act
1903–1906 Chamberlain's Tariff Reform Agitation
1904 Franco-British entente
1905 Partition of Bengal
1905–1908 *Campbell-Bannerman Ministry*
1906 Responsible government in Transvaal
„ Trade Disputes Act
„ Census of Production; Workmen's Compensation
1906–1910 Haldane's Army Reforms
1907 Second Hague Convention
„ Anglo-Russian entente
„ First Imperial Conference
1908–1915 *H. H. Asquith Prime Minister*
1908 Old Age Pensions
1909 Union of South Africa
„ Indian constitutional reforms
„ Trade Boards and Labour Exchanges started
„ Mr. Lloyd George's Budget
1910– George V
1911 Morocco crisis
„ Parliament Act
„ Second Imperial Conference
„ Payment of Members of Parliament
„ Sickness and Unemployment Insurance schemes
„ Widespread Labour unrest
1912 Lord Haldane's Mission to Germany
„ British fleet concentrated in the North Sea
1913–14 Home Rule controversy in Britain
1914 Civil War threatened in Ireland
1914–1918 The Great War
1914 The Retreat from Mons (Aug.)
„ Battle of Tannenberg (Aug.)
„ Battle of the Marne (Sept.)
„ Fall of Antwerp (Oct.)
„ Turkey enters the War (Oct.)
„ First Battle of Ypres (Oct.-Nov.)
„ Battle of Coronel (Nov.)
„ Battle of Falkland Is. (Dec.)
„ Rebellion in S. Africa
1915–16 *First Coalition:* H. H. Asquith Prime Minister; D. Lloyd George Minister of Munitions
1915 Second Battle of Ypres (April)
„ Sinking of the *Lusitania* (May)

DATE

1915 Italy enters the War (May)
„ Russian disasters, Galicia and Poland
„ The Dardanelles Campaign (March-Dec.)
„ Serbia overrun : Allies at Salonika
„ Battle of Ctesiphon and siege of Kut (Dec.)
1916 German attack on Verdun (Feb.–June)
„ Sinn Fein Rising in Dublin
„ Battle of Jutland (May)
„ Conscription adopted in Britain
„ Battle of the Somme (July–Nov.)
„ Rumania enters the War (Aug.) and is overrun
„ Surrender of Kut (April)
1916–1922 *Second Coalition :* D. Lloyd George Prime Minister (Dec.)
1917 Unrestricted submarine war declared (Jan.)
„ Maude captures Baghdad (March)
„ America enters the war (April)
„ Revolution in Russia (March) : Bolsheviks seize power (Nov.)
„ Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (Dec.)
„ French failure in Champagne
„ Battle of Vimy
„ Battle of Passchendaele
„ Italian disaster at Caporetto
„ Allenby enters Jerusalem (Dec.)
1918 Battle of St. Quentin (March)
„ Third Battle of Ypres (April)
„ The attack on Zeebrugge (April)
„ Battle of Chateau Thierry (May)

DATE

1918 Allied advance in France (July–Nov.)
„ Bulgaria asks for armistice (Sept.)
„ Turkey asks for armistice (Oct.)
„ Austria asks for armistice (Nov. 4)
„ Germany asks for armistice (Nov. 11)
„ Revolution in Germany
„ Fourth Reform Act
„ Education Act
„ New Constitution of the Labour Party
„ Congress of Versailles
1919 India Act
„ The Triple Alliance
„ Revolutionary Movements in India
„ War with Afghanistan
„ Milner Commission in Egypt
1919–20 The Sankey Commission
1920 First Meeting of the League of Nations
„ Trade depression
„ Civil War in Ireland
„ Ireland obtains Dominion status
„ Washington Naval Conference
1921 Prolonged coal stoppage
1922 Independence of Egypt recognised
1922–23 *Bonar-Law–Baldwin Ministry*
1923 French occupation of the Ruhr
„ Debt Settlement with America
1924 *First Labour Ministry*
„ The Dawes report
1925– *Second Baldwin Ministry*
1925 Return of the Gold Standard
1926 "General Strike" (May)
„ Prolonged coal stoppage
„ Treaty of Locarno

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